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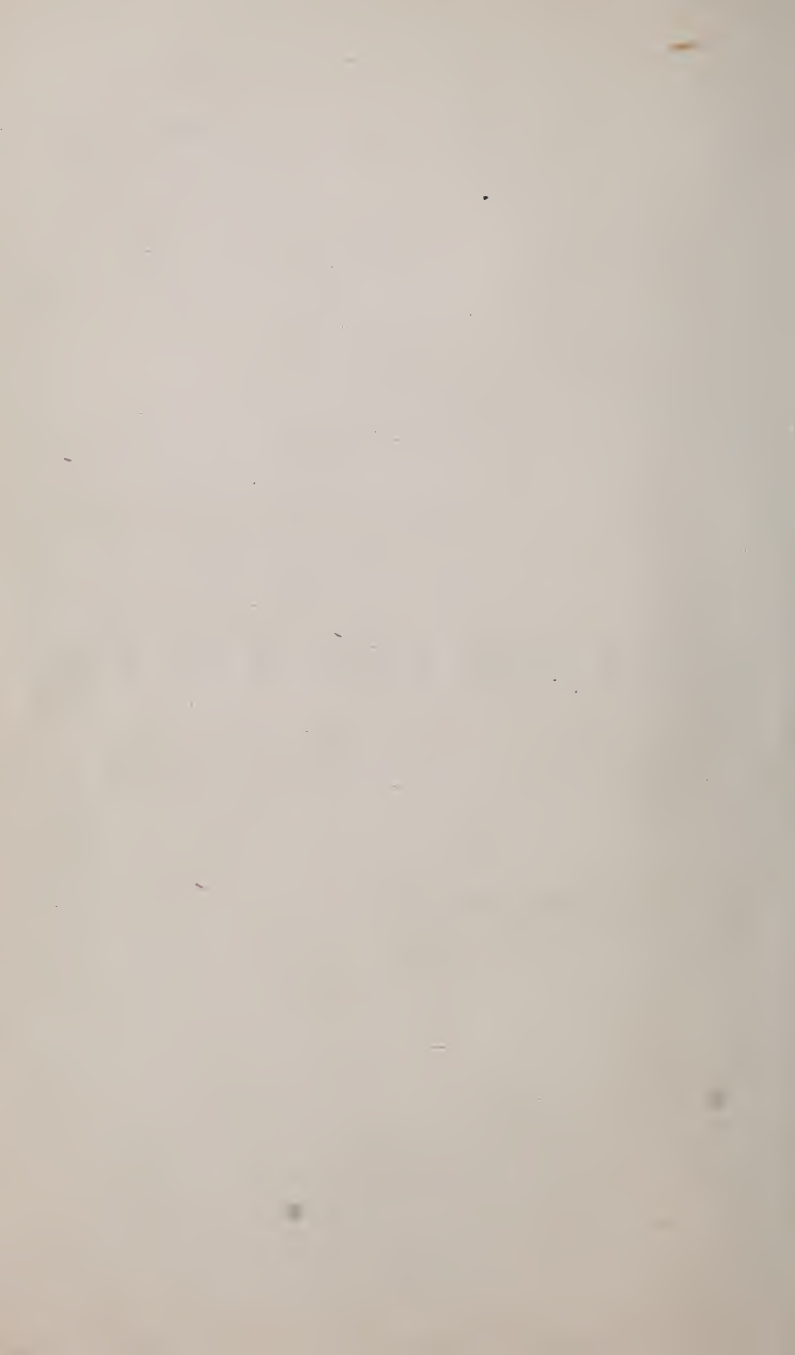
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Wm. H. Hunt

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF THE AGE.



THE
RELIGIOUS ASPECTS
OF THE AGE,

WITH A GLANCE AT

The Church of the Present and the Church of the Future,

BEING ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE YOUNG
MEN'S CHRISTIAN UNION OF NEW YORK, ON THE
13TH AND 14TH DAYS OF MAY, 1858.

BY

SAMUEL OSGOOD, D.D.,
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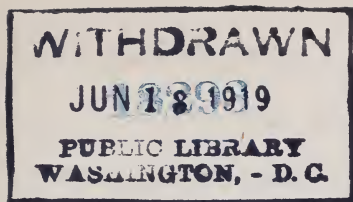
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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE Anniversary of the "Young Men's Christian Union of New York," on the 13th and 14th days of May, 1858, may justly be considered as marking an era in the history of the progress of the Christian Church in America ; inasmuch as it was the first instance in which so many of the leading minds in the various branches of the liberal and progressive portion of the Christian Church have met on one common platform, for the purpose of discussing the practical bearings of that higher type of Christianity which refuses to be limited by any dogma, or fettered by any creed.

The occasion was one of peculiar interest. Such an array of talent as the speakers presented, would, under any circumstances, have given assurance of a rare literary feast ; but when representatives of different branches of the Christian Church, hitherto somewhat antagonistic, found themselves side by side on a broad platform of Christian Charity and Brotherly Love, they could not but draw inspiration from the occasion as well as the soul-inspiring themes on which they dwelt.

Believing that the publication of these addresses, in a suitable form for preservation, as well as for general distribution, will be rendering a valuable service to the cause of practical Christianity, and one that practical Christians all over the land will appreciate and encourage, we have assumed the risk, confidently relying on the efforts of all who sympathize with the

progressive Christian spirit of the age, to extend their circulation.

The "Religious Aspects of the Age," with a glance at the "Church of the Present and the Church of the Future," is a subject in which all are, or should be, interested, and this title has been adopted on account of its peculiar adaptation to the contents of the book.

To accommodate the means and tastes of all, we shall publish a cheap pamphlet edition, and another on superior paper, and neatly bound in cloth.

MARTIN THATCHER, }
ORREN HUTCHINSON, } PUBLISHERS.

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RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF THE AGE.

OPENING ADDRESS.

BY RICHARD WARREN, ESQ.,

President of the Union.

ON this first public anniversary of the "Young Men's Christian Union," it has seemed to the Committee of Arrangements proper that some account of it should be given; and the duty has devolved on me, as the President, to state in brief, what the Union is, and what are its main objects.

Let me premise by remarking that ere this Union was formed, there was a "Young Men's Christian Association" in this city, which exists now. It is composed of those who claim to be, and who style themselves "evangelical," in contradistinction to other sects in the churches, who will not go far enough in doctrines which the Association deems essential to salvation. Therefore all who do not come to that standard are excluded from being members. Most of the doctrines maintained by that Association are held by the great number of churches in our midst. They are, of course, the doc-

trines of the Trinity, and of innate moral depravity. As *belief* in peculiar doctrines is made the test of membership, they who cannot subscribe to such belief as is required, are precluded from becoming members.

A number of young men belonging to the more liberal churches, feeling the desire of more Christian union than seemed to exist, conceived the idea of forming one on a broad and catholic platform, the basis of which should not be a belief in any peculiar dogma or doctrine, but a belief in Christianity itself. With such views this Union was commenced, designed to call together men of various shades of opinion; each one perhaps varying from his neighbor in some things, while all would agree that Jesus the Christ was lawgiver, guide, and exemplar, speaking with the authority of God the Father, to all men. No one professing faith in Christ is to be excluded from this Union.

On this broad principle of religious liberty, this Union is founded. It is broad enough to receive all who are not dogmatists; but, as the so-called Christian world is at present constituted, it would seem that there is more need of holding up to men points of theology and dogmas, than of true and practical Christianity, in obedience to the commands of Jesus the Christ.

Of course, they who compose this Union comprise but a small minority of the nominal Christians even, in this great city. It must look for any great increase to its number of members to those churches which represent Liberal Christianity; and I would not use the word in any technical sense, as indicating a particular party. It

must look to churches or societies of Christians who believe that a man's truest faith is to be known by his works; to those societies and churches who not only theoretically believe in the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man; but who also practically strive to carry out into all life the commendable and the unmis-taken results of such a belief. There are enough of such in the community to form a very large society, would they but come out and work together for the greatest welfare of humanity.

The Union is serious in holding the ideas above named. It is not a mere abstraction. It believes in one God, the Father, the self-existent Creator. It believes in Jesus Christ, his Son, whose precepts, carried out, are for the true life of man; whose precepts, if faithfully followed, would assure the world that he is indeed the Redeemer, who saves men from sin. It believes that the Spirit of the Father is willing to work with every man, his child, in every true work. It cannot throw the responsibility that rests on each individual, that rests on him alone, upon any one else. It cannot believe in mere expedi-ency. It cannot compromise the right. It agrees with Channing that "the first question to be proposed by a rational being is, not what is profitable, but what is right."

"The right is the supreme good, and includes all other good. In seeking and adhering to it, we secure our true and only happiness. All prosperity not founded on it, is built on sand. If human affairs are controlled, as we believe, by Almighty Rectitude and Impartial

Goodness, then to hope for happiness from wrong doing, is as insane as to seek health and prosperity by rebelling against the laws of nature, by sowing our seed on the ocean, or making poison our common food. There is but one unfailing good, and that is fidelity to the everlasting law written on the heart, and rewritten and republished in God's Word."

The Union begins on the assumption that a mere belief in any doctrine, not embraced in the actual *life* of Christ, is not essential to salvation; that no subscription to a dogma, or to a creed, is of itself, nor in itself, of any vital use to an immortal being, only in as far as his life—the every-day of life, of his every-day avocations—shall be governed and regulated by the truth that is embodied in his faith, so that his fellow-men may know that he is striving to lead a holy life, in strict conformity to the teachings of the Master; that his aim ever is "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly on the earth."

This Union believes that God is the Father of all men, and that all men are brothers; that it is the Christian duty of every man to care for others as well as for himself, holding ever up to view the words of Christ: "As a man sows, so shall he reap." It would put away the terrors of the law by calling all God's children to see a Father's love, knowing that perfect love casteth out fear.

Another object this Union has. It would bring together particularly the young men of the city, so that there shall be a closer sympathy; that the different views which have impressed the mind, and which now lie

in the mind without power, because without expression, may be brought out to the light; thus every one will be a learner, and each one, perhaps, a teacher. It is possible that such results can be obtained without the intervention of a creed of man's device. The Union claims that Christianity has a right to and should embrace everything in life.

"All that's fair and bright are thine."

It demands of Art, of Science, of Music, of Politics, of business of every kind, and of all human good, that they shall all bow down before the cross of Christ, and become sanctified and exalted. It fears not to hear a true man speak the sincere convictions of his inmost heart, if spoken in brotherly kindness, without dictation. No one's conscientious scruples are compromised in this Union. No majority has power to seem even to control one. There is argument, and there is discussion, to enforce, or to illustrate, or to draw out the truest ideas of a right course of life under the teachings of the Gospel, and under the Providence of God.

As yet the Union is young in years and in development; but it has already demonstrated that there may be union with diversity of opinion. It has already done some good, and I believe it is destined to accomplish much, if it can have what it now has not, but what it needs. It wants the sympathy of members; it wants the aid of faithful inquiring ones; it calls on all the children of God, not to throw away faith in Him and his Son, but to make that faith seen, as a light set on a

hill, shining brighter and brighter to the perfect day. It calls upon all our churches to unite. It calls on parents to advise their sons to come to its meetings, and to take an active part there. It asks the parents, too, to join with it. It calls on the young men, new residents of the city, to come and find fellowship and brotherly kindness, hoping that hereafter it will do much for the cause of true Christianity on a scale much broader than has been done in the past. It asks of every one to unite to strive to bring down the kingdom of heaven to earth—not in any merely visionary or theological sense, but really and truly, so that every man's life shall attest the truth of his professions.

The great central doctrine and life of Christianity is, that God is the universal Father, and every human being is a child of God. The good Tuckerman, who for years labored to raise men from degradation—who has, I doubt not, with him where he is in peace, many souls as seals of his ministry—thus wrote: "The universal brotherhood of man is a fundamental doctrine of the Gospel. It is essentially one with the great primary doctrine of God the universal Father."

The Christ says to each one who calls himself or herself a disciple; it says to all, whether they call themselves disciples or not: Are you a child of God? So is every human being. Is he, then, who performs for you the humblest services, who waits at your table, who carries your burdens, who does your biddings, a man? He is, then, your brother, and God requires that you love and treat him as a brother. Is he who comes to you for

advice or aid in his difficulties and suffering, a man? Is the most outcast beggar who asks your charity in the streets, or the most guilty convict to be seen in any prison, a man? Is the poor slave, chained down to a hard service, treated as a beast of burden, is he a man? God's higher law—the highest law proclaimed by his Son, written on the heart of every true being, says, Yes! Then all these are as a brother to you :

“Had but a hundredth part of the zeal and labor been directed to the excitement and maintenance of the spirit of Christian brotherhood among men, which have been employed by individuals and sects for the extension and maintenance of articles of faith, which never advanced them a hair's-breadth in the Christian life, millions would have been brought to the knowledge of Christ, who have perished in ignorance of him.”

The Union does not ignore the fact of a diversity of positions in human life, and it believes that life is, by the wisdom of God, unsearchable to man, ordained so that there shall be mutual dependence; and in the Father's sight all who are faithful to the light within them, are equal.

“Honor and shame from no condition rise;
Act well *your* part; *there* all the honor lies.”

The Church of the Past has been slow in receiving the teachings of the Son of God in their practical bearings. Denunciations have been hurled in tones of thunder from the pulpits. Men have heard that they had no

power to save themselves, although the Apostle preached that we must work out our own salvation. Church has condemned Church, and the theological gladiators have stood up to battle down, not only the faith, but also the hopes of their brother man. Dogmatism is rampant now, in this nineteenth century of the Christian era; and he who would do the will of God, if he believes in the popular theology, cannot do it unless he will first believe many things abhorrent to his reason, inconsistent with his idea of a Father in Heaven, and in direct violation of that conscience that God has implanted in every one.

This shall not be so in the Church of the Future. Men will come out from every sect in Christendom—there are signs now of such a coming out—and breaking asunder the bands that bound them to dogmas and creeds, they will come to the true light, as from a prison-house, and will unite in the great work of saving men from sin and misery, and of raising them to the liberty of the children of God.

This is to be the Catholic Church of the Future, whose foundation-stone is Jesus the Christ; whose builder is God, the Father; whose platform is broad enough to admit all of every name, and of every nation, into the household of God, into the family of human brotherhood.

This the Young Men's Christian Union aims to labor for. It calls on all to work with it. Laying aside party and peculiar views, it spreads out its banner to the breeze, on which is inscribed man's equality in the sight of God, a child's fidelity, and a brother's duty.

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE.

BY SAMUEL OSGOOD, D.D.,

Of the Church of the Messiah, New York.

MR. PRESIDENT :—The occasion is somewhat peculiar. We meet here not as individuals, nor as members of certain denominations; but as Christians upon common Christian ground—an attitude that should not be rare, and yet it is somewhat unusual. We meet here as Christians upon common Christian ground, and what is very remarkable is the fact, that this ground of common Christianity does really put us in virtual antagonism to the great majority of the Christian world. The great majority of Christian people, as represented in New York this very week, do not seem to believe that there can be any religion common to all Christians. Their views are so antagonistic to each other that they cannot meet as Christians to any large extent, upon any central platform, and the very organizations that aim to bring the sects together, prove by the very specialty of their purpose the want of those broad principles of Christian charity without which there can be no union.

We, as aiming at Christian Catholicity, find ourselves, therefore, in a minority. And for one, I am ever ready

to be in a minority. It seems to me that, looking through the whole history of the human race from the beginning, there is great deal to be said of the minority, and that it is, generally, a very respectable body. When Christianity began, and the Church was very small, limited to some twelve or seventy persons, that minority, though very few, was not to be despised. At the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, when a little company met around Martin Luther, that company made up in quality for its limit in quantity. I once heard of a Frenchman, who said with a great deal of a Frenchman's simplicity, that he always had one rule in life; that, whenever a difficulty occurred, he always looked to see which was the strongest party, and he went for that side. There are a great many people who think and act upon this principle. But the true nobility of God have not been of this character, and without aiming to be of that elect class, we may, perhaps, take sufficient courage from these reflections, and congratulate ourselves that we are in a minority.

We are assembled on this occasion not as controversialists, but as brethren, and we would express our own honest convictions respecting the Catholicity of the Church of the Future, although I am well aware that the great body of the Christian world will not look upon me or you as in any true way towards Catholicity.

This subject is very suggestive and interesting, occupying the minds of many thinkers in all parts of Christendom now. It is, indeed, somewhat presumptuous for any man to undertake to say what the Future will be.

It is quite difficult for us to say accurately and philosophically what is the present state of things, and surely the man who understands the history of the past is a sage. If the man who understands the current experience of the present day must needs be a profound philosopher, what must he be who shall undertake to designate the Church of the Future? I would not subject myself to any charge of presumption, but will confess with all simplicity at the outset, that the Church of the Future is to be greater than our theories of its constitution, and, like all great providential developments, it will be fully known only when it appears and speaks for itself. My modest task now is merely to sketch a few outlines of its proportions from obvious ideas and events.

First of all, let me say, the Church of the Future is to be reverential, and not destructive. The deepest wisdom of our race is reverential, not destructive. Men have tried the experiment of destroying old institutions without replacing them by new. One of the most radical men of our day, the great Positivist of France, Auguste Comte, lately deceased, maintained that the only way to destroy old institutions is by replacing them. Thus from the very extreme of radicalism, we are justified in our position, while we maintain that there is a cause for the existence of every power and institution, and that no great organization can be wisely set aside unless its place is filled by a more suitable one. It is not well, then, in speaking of the Church of the Future, to speak disparagingly of the Church of the Past. I can speak no unkind word of our ecclesiastical mother, and the Christ

ian Church is the mother of us all. The institution in which we meet here together to-day,—the congregations to which we all belong, are branches of the true vine, and we are children of what may be called the Church of the Past. As we meet together here to-day, bound by the tie of common faith in Christ, we are not to despise the Christianity of former times, and I believe that there is no assembly this week in New York, which is so disposed to treat reverently the Christianity of former times, as this assembly of our own. We are to treat reverently the Christianity of former times because we respect its root, and we should regard charitably its branches. What are we to regard as the root, or the essential principle of the ancient Church? The presence of God in our humanity, the witness of the infinite and eternal spirit in the human soul—that is an essential idea of every form of the Christian religion. The root of the Ancient Church was faith in God's presence with true believers, and a close fellowship growing out of that faith. The essential idea thus accepted is to be always reverently regarded, and however much we may enlarge our idea of the manifestations of God, we can never slight the mighty recognition of this manifestation to men by the Ancient Church, in its progress through Abraham, Moses, David and Isaiah, and, at last, through Jesus Christ and his Apostles, to the communions of Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Alexandria, Rome, Constantinople, and all the great cities of Christendom. The seed was of God, although the soil and nurture may have been of men. We do not believe that God is a new

invention, or that His presence in the human soul is a new revelation. We believe that God hath never left Himself without a witness in any age. We believe that there were divine and permanent elements in the most ancient dispensation. The law was given by Moses, and we have that law in Jesus Christ in its blessed fulfillment. In him the light of the eternal Word was made known in direct manifestation through its anointed head, and the early Christian Church was the witness of that Word. Now surely we ought not to treat the old religions with contempt, because the whole germ was not fully developed in the past. Looking at the branches of the Ancient Church, we are to interpret them with the charity of fellowship, while we regard the root with the spirit of reverence.

Surveying Christendom at large, I suppose we may discern in it three general divisions; although we may, perhaps, justly add a fourth. There is what may be called the High Church, the Low Church, and the Broad Church. The true representative of the High Church is the Roman Catholic—the most consistent and respectable exclusive Church in Christendom. If we are going to play the exclusive, there is but one respectable position for us, and we should go to the Pope, for he understands that business, as he has been studying in a school that has been in practice for thousands of years. He is a legitimate High Churchman. His doctrine is the legitimacy of the priesthood, and by the incarnation of God in Christ, he claims power to dispense sacramental graces through a close corporation of priests. This is High

Churchism, in its day a noble institution, and what is more clear than that, all forms of extreme modern High Churchism, whether English or German, are assuming the type of this old Catholicism. The extreme High Church portion of the Church of England is going over to Rome. The Broad Church party is the life of the Protestant principle in that Church; but the scholars and devotees and poets of the retrogressive Oxford School have looked fondly towards Rome, and turned towards the Eternal City with their faces when they have not gone thither bodily.

The Low Church we regard as that which, whether called Episcopal, Presbyterian or Independent, does not base itself upon priestly legitimacy, but upon the Scripture as a literal revelation of the mind of God, and upon doctrines essentially Calvinistic as the teachings of Scripture. They interpret the Scriptures in such a way as to narrow down the whole of revelation to a few points, and mainly to a single doctrine; that the justification of our totally depraved and doomed human souls, rests not on the essential mercy of God in all forms and in its eternal offers, but upon that mercy only as purchased by the substitution and sacrifice of Christ in place of the sinful. This is essentially the Low Church doctrine; and John Calvin is the great head of all Low Churchmen. I may use "Low Churchmen" in the philosophical sense, and not merely in the sense in which it is used in the Church of England. This is the Holy Week of Low Churchism or Evangelicalism in New York that is now passing. It is because this Association cannot accept

the principles of the exclusive doctrine called "Evangelical," that you invite your friends here to-day to this season of worship and meditation. Now let us not disparage what we call the Low Church, for many of us are the children of this Church. I, myself, was baptized in a Calvinist Congregationalist Church, by a Calvinist minister of the old school, and I am quite ready to believe that, in spite of his very narrow and chilling doctrine, he was a pious man, and his soul full of the love of God. But the fact of his pious character did not necessarily make his doctrine an infallible rule.

We are to respect Puritanism—the extreme of Low Churchism—for its liberty and valor in assailing the old despotisms. If we take away the element of liberty from the old Calvinistic doctrine, the system is less godly, less humane, than old Romanism in its best days, or even than the old Hebrew system. The Calvinistic system is more narrow in its estimate of humanity, less true to God's mercy here and hereafter, less liberal in its views of human life, less cognizant of its more genial side, than was old Judaism, or the ancient Church of Rome. The type of humanity as recognized in the old church was larger and nobler far than according to the model set up in the Institutes of John Calvin. I honor that man for his Protestant determination, and his adherence to liberty—as he understood it in his day, although he was false to his principle by limiting freedom of conscience to his own Church at Geneva, and because the blood of an innocent man was virtually

upon his bigoted hands. The Low Church doctrine is inconsistent. It is impossible for the common type of Evangelical orthodoxy to prove its usual doctrine of the plenary authority and verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, without going back to the infallibility of the Ancient Church, which transmits to us the Scriptures. And this whole system of the literal inspiration of the Bible, which gives equal force to the imprecations of David against his enemies, and to the beatitudes of our blessed Lord upon the Mount, is radically defective and untenable without going over to Rome, the only constituted representative of absolutism in religion, and for ages the Providential guardian of the sacred books. I believe, not only, that Calvinism is thus inconsistent, but that it is not in the front rank of humanity now; when it was upon the side of liberty, it was progressive and honorable, not on account of its exclusiveness, but on account of its liberty. Its liberty we may honor, whilst its exclusiveness we reject.

Calvinism is now in the way of humanity, and they who professedly wear its mantle are, above all others, the censors of its superstitions. It narrows God's mercies into an arbitrary partiality and substitutes the king of the elect in place of the Father of Spirits. It does not present God's love to us in nature and in humanity, nor in the whole compass even of the gospel does it show forth the Father's mercy—not in the whole life of our blessed Lord himself, but as only indicated in one act of our Lord's mission—his death—and in only one aspect of that act. It seemed to think only of a dying Christ,

while the Broad Church thinks of a living Christ loving the whole world, and dying because he loved all and would save all. In this living Christ we devoutly believe; even in that Divine Humanity now living in heaven; now the mediator of the new covenant; now the Comforter in every affliction, dispensing spiritual blessings to the human race.

We respect what is called the Low Church in spite of its exclusive doctrines, on account of the noble principles that have been manifested in its career, and the piety and charity that have often been exhibited by its champions in spite of itself. But we look upon the system as wholly unreasonable, and it seems to us, to be sinking fast in the judgment of the ablest thinkers and scholars of the New Christendom, whilst its positive merits are likely to be lost sight of by the young and progressive minds even of orthodoxy itself.

I might say, adding another to the number of churches I have named, that there is another division, the No Church, or party of individual liberty, which starts upon the idea of entire individuality, and believes, in popular phrase, in "going upon its own hook." I suppose if we take the representation of the High Church to be Hildebrand, and of the Low Church to be Calvin, there is no better type for what may be called the No Church than our own gifted Ralph Waldo Emerson. He may be fitly called the prophet of the first person singular. He has a certain kind of respect for the human race as a race, but a very large respect for that portion of it incorporated into each man's char-

acter, especially in his own personality. He was very desirous to see the old world and learn for himself what the ages have been doing. He enjoyed his visit like a poet and philosopher, but found at Rome and Florence only his own soul repeated in the creations of Raphael and Michael Angelo. Florence could do little for him, for he had seen it all virtually before in the visions and fancies of his own mind in the bush at good old Concord in Massachusetts. We all belong to a great humanity, and no one man makes, or comprehends, the whole of that humanity, for "God created man in His own image; male and female created he them." The whole race, therefore, men and women, represents the divine image, and the creed of individualism is unsound, by mistaking a part for the whole.

But this No Church is to be respected. We are to remember that in all ages there has been a humanity not in church relations, and which has had, moreover, some essentially Christian elements. There has been a great deal of humanity that was Christ-like before Christ came. I suppose there are speakers in this city to-day—although I hope there are not a great many of them—who believe that all the heathen, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Confucius, and all their peers, are doomed to everlasting woe because they did not believe in Christ, and were naturally depraved. We entertain no such damnable doctrine, believing that every man who is true to his best light is justified before God, and that there have been true men in all ages. And as there is, and always has been, a large humanity outside

the Christian Church, embodying in itself important elements of religion, and as we are to carry every worthy element of life into the Church of the Future, we are to accept that form of humanity that appears in strong individuality, and to take the "No Church" into our keeping. If we were to ask ourselves, where is the truest humanity, inside of exclusive churches or outside, the answer would be quite difficult. If we were asked where we would place our chance of salvation, with the great body of honest, unpretending worldlings who are outside of the Pharasaic Churches, or with the Sanhedrims of exclusives who shut themselves up in their self-righteousness, and call themselves the elect saints of God, our chance might be as good with the worldlings, although we much prefer a place in the true, free, and universal Church of God.

But the Christian Church may not only be considered under these various points, but in an aspect still more comprehensive, and one which regards our religion as answering to every worthy interest in life. The Broad Church accepts this last idea; and will not disown anything that is true to our humanity. The Broad Church will recognize the elements of real worth in the High Church, especially its comprehensive policy, and beautiful tastes; it will appreciate the germ of truth in the Low Church, especially its rugged vigor and Protestant freedom; nor will it scorn the No Church, which is independent, nor neglect to learn some wisdom from the Come Outer? The Broad Church, which is rising in every quarter of Christendom, does not

despise anything that is true to our common humanity in its personal and Catholic development. There is nothing more cheering towards such anticipations than the movements among the noblest believers of the Church of England now. Attached to their own ecclesiastical polity, they accept the leadings of God's Providence, and are not blind to the light now breaking upon Christendom. Take the works of Kingsley, and Maurice, and Jowett, and their associates; and last, but not least, consider that rare and noble spirit so recently removed from the earth—him whom we have reason to call brother,—Robertson, late of Brighton. Is it not clear that the great mission of these men has been to vindicate the genial life of our common humanity against the thralldom of exclusive dogmatism and theological caste? They are builders in that Broad Church in whose rising walls we too rejoice. The platform that I have marked out for myself is too large for me to occupy, I am well aware, and I must be content with a few outlines. I have thus illustrated my first point that the Catholicity of the Church of the Future is to be reverential, appreciating the nobler and purer elements in the High Church, in the Low Church, not slighting even the No Church, and planting itself with especial love upon the essential principles of the Broad Church.

Let me say now that the Church of the Future, in its Catholicity, is to be progressive; it is to grow out of its own root; it is to branch up in its own liberty through every legitimate manifestation of its own power under the providential circumstances of its own

position. The man who denies that the true catholicity is reverential, is like the man who maintains that there can be a growth without a root. The Apostle asserted the true principle of conservative reform when he maintained "thou bearest not the root, but the root beareth thee." The true Churchman believes that he grows from a providential root, and thus is reverential whilst progressive. And he maintains, moreover, that the tree must have branches as well as the root, and so he is progressive. A man may believe in a root, and the root may be a dead one; and so he may make a fossil of himself; or a man may believe in the branch, and deny the root, and thus in his haste to grow, have nothing to grow from. And if we call a man who denies the branches an "old foggy" who wishes to make of everybody else a fossil because he stopped growing himself, we may coin a new word, and call the impatient progressive, "young flighty," who expects things to grow without the root, which is the only basis of growth. The true Churchman will believe in conservative progress and in growth from the root in genial and fruitful branches. Now what is the true root of the Catholicity of the future? Shall we not make this distinction? The catholicity of the past—that is, of the old High Church, had its root in priestly legitimacy, growing out of the incarnation of God as represented by priestly sacraments. The Low Church had its root in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, and in the doctrine of a vicarious atonement, justifying the elect from the general curse of total depravity. Now the Church of

the Future takes its position in the manifestation of God in the human soul, especially in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Son of man, and believes in the development of that divine life in every form of true humanity. God with man, this is the starting principle of faith, and a life divinely human; this is the manifestation of the faith. We believe that this is the essential spirit of the Church of the Future. No new principle indeed, for we don't believe in any absolutely new religion, much as we believe in progressive humanity. We maintain that we have the same root to grow from, that was possessed by the Church of the Past, and we think that there is at present throughout Christendom a strong tendency to legitimate true progress which is indicated by a reverent study of antiquity.

The Napoleonism of the old world represents a power always hostile to such humanity and faith. Down with freedom—a curse upon progress—bring back the old tyrannies—this is the cry. Such Napoleonism is the union of base material interest, with military and priestly despotism. Napoleonism is now—although we trust not for a great while—the great ruling power in Europe; not indeed in England—thank God for that exception. This same despotic usurpation sometimes shows its head in our America—takes its seat in our senates—betrays its temper in Presidents' messages, and tries to strangle Young Liberty in our new states. We may perhaps see something of its doings in the discussions of our tract societies. It has

many elements in its composition, but it is in the main a combination of material interest and wealth-worship, with military and priestly despotism. This spirit sets its face against all progress, and is every where the deadly enemy of all liberal Christianity.

Now the Catholicity of the Future will not obey the dictations of this foul despotism, either in the old world or the new. We, as looking forward to the Church of the Future, claim our right to grow, although we do not claim our right absolutely to construct a new order. We believe in growing providentially out of the soil in which we are planted. The old Church grew, and why should not we? Even imperial Rome, that claims to herself to be the eternal city, and to embody in her doctrines the absolute and eternal truth, has been developing her principles for thousands of years and adding to her creeds and ritual. The recent decree as to the worship of the Virgin, in spite of its superstition, is a declaration of the right of progress, and Rome is yet destined to take her place among the progressive churches. Our Calvinist brethren too are virtually changing their ground. And yet we are told that theology is fixed, and that there shall be no new developments. Now we claim that we have a right to grow according to our providential opportunities, and we too, as well as the old churches, are children of the living God.

Now take the denominations represented here to-day, and there is no reason why every denomination in Christendom should not be represented here. We would be very glad to see our Roman Catholic brother;

our Calvinist brother, our Methodist brother, especially if he would bring here the best of his hymns, which are sweet favorites in our own hymn book. We would be very glad to sing with him those blessed words:—

“Love divine, all love excelling,
Joy of heaven to earth come down.”

We would welcome them all, although they may not choose to come; and the denominations represented here have been brought hither by the force of certain convictions, and not by their own arbitrary will. I think, for instance, that some of us are called providentially to be Unitarians; we have been educated in the Unitarian faith, although, perhaps, baptized in the Orthodox churches. I am a Unitarian, and I am not ashamed to stand up here and say, I believe in one God the Father everlasting; one God in one person (in the usual sense of the term—person.) I believe in that one God as especially manifested in Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of man. I believe in the Holy Spirit, not as the third person in the Godhead, but as the spirit of the Father, and revealed in and through the Son as the witness and comforter in every faithful soul. That is essentially my creed, and from this position I seek to build up my portion of the Broad Church, and welcome every brother to like liberty.

We are not to go to Cambridge or to Boston for authority, nor to rest content with what we have done here. Are we to accept a poor denominationalism, instead of a

large liberal Christianity? We mean to grow from the root in all the freedom of our own convictions, and in all the opportunities of our providential position. And it seems to me, that one great mistake has been made in our churches—that we do not apply our doctrines to our pastoral methods in the administration of worship and the education of the young in the Church; while the liberal denominations have thrown off the old exclusiveness, they will retain a great deal of miserable narrowness, and persist in retaining the poverty of the meager ritual of Puritanism, long after the ghostly terror that gave it power has passed away. Calvin pretty much finished the work of destruction when he supplanted the beautiful ritual and pastoral comprehensiveness of the Ancient Church by his stern dogmatism; and our Puritan meeting-houses but imbodyed the same temper with fewer enticements from ancient poetry and art. We are not to try to restore the old order of worship, but to develop the new. We must do this or our liberty is but a name. I do not believe in mere imitation; we are to learn from nature and from God, the true order of worship and to interest the sensibility and imagination of our people, especially of our young people, or we have no right to claim true Catholicity.

I have spoken as long as I ought, and yet I have illustrated, and that imperfectly, but two ideas that I intended to present to you. I have said that the Catholicity of the Future is to be first reverential, and secondly progressive. The third point I merely state; and should there be a vacancy at some other time, I may throw in

a passing word: that the Catholicity of the Church of the Future will prove itself by its fruits of divine humanity. Had I time now, I might show that the true Church of the Future must bring the whole compass of our spiritual capacities within the influence of God's grace, and win mankind to a true fellowship with each other in winning them to the faith that works by love. This topic would treat of the reconciliation of science with faith, industry with spirituality, society with devotion, art with religion, and manliness with godliness. But I must now say farewell. *

* For the conclusion of this subject see Appendix.

THE TRUE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN UNION.

BY REV. B. F. BARRETT,

Of the New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian) Church, Orange, N. J.

MR. PRESIDENT: I have been kindly invited by the Chairman of the Anniversary Committee of the Young Men's Christian Union, to be present on this occasion, and to make some remarks upon the subject just announced by the President—"The true basis of Christian Union." I am fully aware that it would have been more prudent—perhaps more becoming—in an individual like myself, to have declined than to have accepted the invitation—being unaccustomed to address, on occasions like this, an audience such as I now see before me. But it was not in my heart to decline. I sympathize so cordially with this movement of the Young Men of New York and vicinity, and with the objects contemplated by this Union, and approve so heartily the platform upon which this Union is established, that I could not stay away from the present meeting. And as a musical instrument, which, by itself, makes very inferior music, may, if keyed to the right note, sometimes heighten the effect of a whole band, so I hope that what I may say will so chime in with the thoughts of other speakers as to add something to the interest of this occasion.

I hail this "Union" of the Young Men of your city as a movement in the right direction. Its objects as declared in the second Article of its Constitution which I have just read, are "the investigation and development of moral and religious truth, and the promotion of Christian charity and fellowship, irrespective of class or sect." These are noble objects. I can hardly conceive of any more worthy. They are such as all good and charitable people must cordially approve, and earnestly desire to promote.

✎ We meet here to-day as Christian brethren from different religious denominations, holding somewhat different forms of faith, or views of Christian truth, and each one allowed to retain his own honest convictions, and to express them with entire freedom; yet all having in view one grand purpose—the promotion of genuine charity, or a higher and more truly Christian life. It is a spectacle at which the angels may rejoice. I regard this meeting itself as a practical illustration of my theme. It is one of the signs of the times. It indicates the dawn of a new and better Era in the Church. It proves, I think, that there is a higher ground of union among Christians than that of mere *belief*. It shows how men of various beliefs may meet and mingle together like brethren, without any surrender or compromise of their honest opinions—all being animated by the spirit of charity, and a love, more or less intense, for their common Master. Why should they not do so? Why should not Christians, entertaining different views of religious truth, still regard and treat each other

as brethren, and thus be united in spirit? Unity of spirit with diversity of belief—unity with variety—this is the order of heaven—this is the doctrine I advocate. Let me expand this idea.

The human mind is so constituted that it loves unity in all things. But the most perfect unity is compatible with the greatest variety. It consists in no metaphysical oneness, but in the harmonious arrangement of parts that are different. All nature is adapted to this constitution of the human mind; for the whole created universe is a unit. Look at the sky by night; you see there innumerable stars, differing in magnitude, and at different distances from each other. The planets have each a measure of its own, and threads its path around the sun with a velocity peculiar to itself. Look at the earth by day; you see it everywhere diversified with hill and valley, rock and stream, mountain and lake. The forests abound with trees, all differing in color, form and size. The earth teems with an endless variety of mineral products; the waters with an endless variety of fishes; the fields and the air, with an endless variety of beasts and birds. And if we descend from generals to particulars, the same diversity is still observable. No two leaves on any tree are precisely alike. Every bird has a feather different from every other in the flock, and every flower is painted with a hue different from all its brothers. Yet what complete harmony—what perfect unity—amid this endless variety in the outward universe! A unity all the more perfect because of this variety. And among men you will

never see two countenances precisely alike ; and even the same countenance is made up of an endless variety of different lines and different hues, all blending together in complete harmony. And so with the noblest triumphs of Art ; the most perfect poem consists in the harmonious arrangement of different thoughts ; the most perfect painting in the harmonious arrangement of different colors ; and the most perfect music in the harmonious blending of different sounds.

The human body furnishes another and admirable illustration of the same great truth. It consists of a great number of organs, all differing in their structure, form, and functions, yet all perfectly united, working together in the most intimate, brotherly relations, dependent all on the pulsations of one heart, and together constituting a perfect unit—a complete whole.

And so it is throughout the whole of God's visible universe. Variety in unity is written upon it all. Why should it not be so in the moral universe ? Why should it not be so in heaven, and in God's church on earth ? The great Swedenborg—and his name, I am sure, may be mentioned on this platform without exciting other feelings than those of kindness and respect—uttered a great truth, and one of practical moment, when he said that Heaven is in the form of a man. The expression strikes us oddly at first ; but the meaning is, that, as the human body is made up of a great number of organs, all differing from each other in their forms and functions, yet all pervaded by one and the same life-blood, and all intimately bound together, and

working in the most affectionate and harmonious manner, so heaven consists of a great number of angelic societies, all different from each other, holding somewhat different views of truth, and performing somewhat different uses, yet all acting together in the most sweet and loving unity, because all are pervaded and animated by the Lord's own life—the spirit of disinterested neighborly love.

Now suppose this heavenly doctrine brought down to earth. Suppose it to be generally recognized among Christians as sound doctrine. What would be its legitimate practical effect? Would there be wars and divisions among us? Would there be enmities and hatreds among the various Christian sects? No more than among the different members of the human body. But would Christians be all alike? Would they believe all alike? Would my creed be your creed, and your creed your neighbor's? By no means. There would be the same diversity in the forms of our faith that there is in the forms of our faces—the same as there is in the forms and functions of the several members and organs of the human body. Yet there would be as complete and perfect union as among the different bodily members. They would work just as harmoniously together, and feel and manifest the same tender concern for, and the same affectionate interest in, each other. This doctrine, then, announced by the great Seer of Sweden, concerning the form of heaven, is eminently a practical doctrine. It is one which favors no dead uniformity in the church—no perfect agreement in doctrine and ritual, but

endless variety, with complete harmony—unity of spirit with diversity of belief. It is in harmony also with that divine declaration, “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” And this doctrine will be practically acknowledged among men, just in the degree that the true Church is established and built up—just in the degree that the will of the Father is done on the earth as it is done in heaven.

We look around us and see the Church of Christ divided into a great number of sects, each differing somewhat from its neighbor in doctrine and ritual. To me, this is by no means a sad or disagreeable spectacle. It is a thing to be expected. It is proper and right. Indeed it is unavoidable in a community where the people are both honest and free. When we consider men’s different hereditary forms and endowments; their different temperaments and mental constitutions; the different manner in which they have been educated; the different intellectual, moral and religious influences which have surrounded them from their earliest infancy; the different kinds and degrees of religious instruction which they have received from parents, books, and teachers; how is it possible, supposing them all to be honest, that they should all be perfectly agreed in their doctrinal beliefs? How is it possible that they should all estimate evidence or understand the Scriptures precisely alike? The very perfection of God’s Word consists in the fact, that it contains food for the human soul in every possible stage of its development; that it is at once suited to the wants of the wisest angels and the

most ignorant men. Yet how differently must these two extremes of humanity understand the Word! each receiving and appropriating so much and such form of truth, as is adapted to its own state. And so among Christians, there is, and ever must be, a great variety of mental states, some more and others less perfect; and if all are honest, there ought to be a corresponding variety in their perceptions of truth, or in their religious belief. *Belief* is not, as some suppose, a mere voluntary act. Neither can it be *compelled*. It is the result of evidence; and the evidence that fully satisfies me in a given case, may be quite insufficient to carry conviction to the mind of my equally honest neighbor. What, then, shall we do? Hate and persecute one another because of our differences of opinion? or seek for a higher and truer basis of union than that of mere belief? a basis which will allow different beliefs, and the union be all the stronger and more perfect because of these differences? Such a basis is true charity—love to the Lord and to the neighbor—which is the great *end* of all doctrine and of all belief.

To an enlightened and pious mind, then, the great number of sects into which the Christian Church is divided, is no melancholy spectacle. But to see alienation, strife, and bitterness among these sects—to see them hating, vilifying, and persecuting each other because of their doctrinal differences—this is sad and dreadful indeed! A spectacle that might well make the angels weep! And what has produced this sad state of things? What, but the exaltation of *faith*

above charity? What, but the preëminence which has been given to the dogma of justification and salvation by *faith alone*? When mere belief is held to be the primary and essential thing, no wonder that it should be deemed equally essential for men to believe exactly *right*. When error of doctrine is held to be damnable, no wonder that all forms of belief deemed heretical, should be scrupulously hunted down, and visited with the severest penalties. No wonder that the powerful enginery of ecclesiastical bodies should be brought to bear upon heretics, with the view to enforce uniformity of religious belief, and that bitter strifes and hatreds should spring up among different sects.

Here, then, I conceive, is the grand mistake which Christians have committed. It is in making *belief* primary, and *life* secondary; in seating religion in the head, rather than in the heart. And this mistake must be corrected, before the sad consequences which result from it can be averted. We must insist on the preëminence of *charity*. We must place *life* above *doctrine*, and regard as of more consequence how a man *lives* than what he *believes*. And this will soon lead us to a juster appreciation of the true spirit and essence of our religion. For what is the *essence* of Christianity? Is it not a divine spirit dwelling in the heart, sanctifying the affections, purifying the motives, softening the temper, refining the feelings, and pervading the whole life with its fragrant and heavenly aroma? Wherever we see the spirit of disinterested neighborly love—the spirit of self-denial, humility, meekness, forbearance, gentleness,

resignation, trust, there we see something of the essence of Christianity—for there we see the spirit of Christ. And all who have his spirit belong to his family and household. They are his spiritual offspring, having his own image and likeness stamped upon them. However they may differ in their doctrinal beliefs, their *ends* are similar. They are really one at heart, having one Master, Christ, and acknowledging as brethren all those who have drunk of his spirit.

Here, then, is the true basis of Christian union—not in a creed, or in a perfect uniformity of religious belief, for this is out of the question; but in that humble, loving, and trusting spirit which is superior to all creeds, and which is quite compatible with diversity of belief. This is clearly the teaching of our Saviour, as well as that of the Apostles. The blessing is pronounced on the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, the meek and lowly, the self-denying, the peace-makers, they that “hear the Word of God and *do it*.” And we are told, that upon those two Commandments, which require love to the Lord and the neighbor, “hang *all* the law and the prophets;” as if true love were the very end and substance of them all. And Paul evidently so understood it; for he declares that “love is the fulfilling of the law,” and “he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,” for God IS love. And nothing else makes us truly Christians but the spirit of Christ dwelling and operating in our hearts. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Yes, none of his, whatever be his creed, or however pure and abun-

dant the truth he may believe. And “the *fruit* of the Spirit,” says the Apostle, “is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.”

Let me not be understood, however, as intimating that men’s beliefs are of no consequence, or of little consequence; or that *all* religious beliefs are of equal value. I mean no such thing. Our beliefs have much to do in forming the spirit within us. Some kinds of belief induce a cold, sad, severe, and misanthropic state of mind. Some sour the temper, and petrify the heart. There are some things also *essential* for a Christian to believe, and without which he would not be a Christian. It is essential that he believe not only in the existence of God, but in the great revelation which God has made of himself in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The doctrine of God manifest in the flesh—God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself—is a central truth of our religion, and one which distinguishes it from all other religions. The divinity and inspiration of the Scriptures is another thing essential for a Christian to believe; for the whole of Christianity is wrapped up in the Scriptures; and to deny or doubt their inspiration, is to deny or doubt the divine origin and nature of our religion. It is to loosen the bond of union between heaven and earth, or between God and the human soul. Then, although there are many things in the Bible about which men may honestly differ, there are also many things—and these the most important, too—about which there is no room for an honest differ-

ence of opinion among candid and intelligent people. They are passages which exhibit the *spirit* of the Bible, as it were naked—visible to all eyes. Such, for example, are the commandments of the Decalogue, and all those plain precepts which inculcate the importance of disinterested benevolence, purity of heart, a meek, resigned, forbearing, self-denying, loving, trustful spirit. A life of charity is so often and so plainly insisted on in the Scriptures, that, however widely people may differ on other points of doctrine, they can hardly fail to agree in this—the importance of *a good life*. The necessity of obeying the Lord's commandments, then, and obeying them from a religious principle, is another thing essential for a Christian to believe. For without a belief in such necessity, a man would not shun evils as sins against God. "Abide in me, and I in you," says our Divine Master. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches." Now, to be thus united to Christ, as the branch to the vine, is to have his Divine Spirit dwelling in our hearts, with a living and operative energy—going forth in all the relations of life, like the odor of flowers—perpetually diffusing around us the fragrance of that disinterested love, which was so conspicuous in our Saviour's life on earth, and which He now imparts, from his Divine Humanity, to the hearts of all his faithful followers.

I hold, then, that these three—the divinity of the Lord (or God manifest in Christ), the divinity of the

Word, and a life according to the Commandments, are central and vital truths in the Christian system. Yet even these essential truths may be—yea, must be—differently apprehended by different minds. But if the acknowledgment of these fundamental truths in some form, as constituting a vital part of our religion, may be regarded as an essential condition of Christian union, a wide diversity of opinion on other subjects may be tolerated, without disturbing the peace and union of brethren. Indeed, the union will be more perfect, because of this diversity; for the strongest and most perfect union, as I have before remarked, consists always in the harmonious arrangement of parts that are *different*, just as the most perfect music consists in the harmonious blending of different sounds. Variety in unity is stamped on all the works of God. And this, I think, must hold true in the moral as in the natural universe.

As I have already mentioned the name of the great Seer of Sweden, I will close my remarks by reading the following pertinent extracts from this celebrated author :

“There are three essentials of the Church—an acknowledgment of the Lord’s divinity, an acknowledgment of the holiness of the Word, and the life which is called charity. Every man’s faith is conformable to his life—that is, his charity. From the Word he has a knowledge of what his life ought to be, and from the Lord he has reformation and salvation.

If these three had been held as essentials of the Church intellectual dissensions would not have divided it, but only have varied it; as the light varies colors in beautiful objects, and as a variety of jewels constitute the beauty of a king's crown."—*Divine Providence*, 259.

"Mutual love and charity are effective of unity or oneness, even amongst varieties, uniting varieties into one; for let numbers be multiplied ever so much, even to thousands and tens of thousands, if they are all principled in charity or mutual love, they have all one end, viz. the common good, the kingdom of the Lord, and the Lord himself; in which case the varieties in matters of doctrine and worship are like the varieties of the senses and viscera in man, which contribute to the perfection of the whole."—*Arcana Cœlestia*, 1285.

"Doctrinals alone do not constitute the external, much less the internal of the Church; neither do they serve to distinguish churches before the Lord; but this is effected by a life according to doctrinals, all which, if they are true, regard charity as their fundamental. For what is the end and design of doctrinals but to teach how a man should *live*? The several churches in the Christian world are distinguished by their doctrinals; and the members of those churches have hence taken the names of Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, or the Reformed Protestants, with many others. This distinction of names arises solely from doctrinals, and would never have had place if the members of the

Church had made love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor, the principal point of faith. Doctrinals would then be only varieties of opinion concerning the mysteries of faith, which they who are true Christians would leave to every one to receive according to his conscience; whilst it would be the language of their hearts that he is a true Christian who lives as a Christian, that is, as the Lord teaches. Thus one church would be formed out of all these diverse ones, and all disagreements arising from mere doctrinals would vanish; yea, all the animosities of one against another would be dissipated, and the kingdom of the Lord would be established on earth.”—*Arcana Cœlestia*, 1790.

“All doctrinals whatsoever, if so be they are derived from the Word, are accepted of the Lord, provided that the person who is principled therein be in the life of charity; for to the life of charity all things which are of the Word may be conjoined.”—*Arcana Cœlestia*, 3452.

This is *Swedenborgianism*, popularly so called. This is the genuine spirit of Christianity. This discloses the true basis of Christian union. This is to be the broad and sure foundation of that Church of the Future, towards which so many anxious eyes are turned, and for the hastening on of which so many devout prayers are uttered.

WORSHIP—ITS NECESSITY.

BY REV. B. PETERS,

Of Williamsburgh.

MR. PRESIDENT: As this is the Anniversary of the Young Men's Christian Union, I cannot but regard the theme upon which I am called to speak, as one peculiarly fitting. A union of this kind must be made up of young men, who not only appreciate the importance of worship, but who, at all proper times, seek its hallowed influence for the better cultivation of their noblest faculties.

We should ever bear the fact in mind, that man is not only a physical being, but that he also possesses a spiritual nature; and that worship is just as essential to his spiritual life as respiration is to his physical. We have lungs of devotion, by whose healthy action the vitalizing influence of Christian truth is sent through our entire spiritual framework; giving life, health, proportion and beauty to the whole. Man is peculiarly distinguished by this capacity to worship; and not only distinguished, but exalted and honored thereby. By the exercise of this capacity, man holds communion with God, the Great Father of *all*, and the very fact that we hold communion with him, is demonstrative

proof that we are linked to God by ties of the nearest relationship. How tenderly, and trustingly does the little child nestle in its mother's bosom ! How confidently do faithful children always look to a kind father for aid and protection ! And what is worship, but a recognition of God as our Father ? What is it but the outpouring of the human soul in gratitude to him for his goodness and mercy ? What is it but the man—the full grown child nestling in the great Father's bosom ? In childhood we look to our parents for aid and protection. It is just as natural for us to do so, as it is for us to breathe ; but when childhood passes away and manhood takes its place, we then discover the fact that our parents are just as weak, and dependent upon a superior power, as we ourselves. It is then that the soul goes out for that protection which never fails, and in search of that arm which “is never shortened that it cannot save.”

Skepticism may deny the necessity of worship, and say it is an idle task ; it may even spurn the measure of faith which it requires, but that opposition is futile and vain. Worship is just as natural, and the desire to worship as universal, as the thirst for knowledge, or the desire for progress. Have men, at times, failed to worship ? So have they neglected to seek knowledge, and remained in ignorance often for ages. Have they refused to recognize God ? So have they spurned the law of progress, and remained in almost a *fossil*—stationary condition for centuries.

Religion is as old as man. It was born with the race ; Adam inhaled it with the breath of life which

God breathed into him when he became a living soul. It has been with the race from that day to this, through all time, through all changes, during all revolutions, and in all perils. It has found its way through every land, and its footprints may be distinctly traced through all history.

Religion, then, is not an invention of priests, but is God-given and divine. Man is the only creature capable of worshipping. He stands at the apex of this material world, and by the gift of this capacity, spiritually speaking, his head touches the very heavens. There is a profound significance to the words which declare that he was "made but a little lower than the angels." When he assumes the attitude of worship, he assumes the noblest possible. He opens a communication between himself and his God. It is to his soul the opening of heaven, the emission of celestial light upon his earth-born countenance, transforming him into a child of light and of love.

It is said that "day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge," and that "the heavens show forth God's praise;" but man is the only creature capable of rendering self-conscious and intelligent worship. Through his lips, therefore, nature finds a fit outlet for praise to God. This is done by the incentives which nature furnishes. As the waters, which are carried in vapor along the heavens, when condensed, are thrown down in showers upon the hills and plains, are collected in springs and rivulets, are carried through mountain gorges and valleys, over rocks,

and beds of shining pebbles, into the great stream; thence roll in majesty and grandeur to its mouth, and are poured out through that into the great sea; so does the inspiration of the golden sunshine, of the perfumed flowers, of the crystal dew of morning, of the song of birds, and of the splendor of the heavens, flow through a thousand channels into the human soul, to find an outlet for praise and thanksgiving through human lips to the Giver of all. These are the great incentives to worship.

Worship, which is thus natural to our moral nature, and essential to our spiritual existence, should be cultivated by proper exercise. Inaction is as fatal to our spiritual life, as it is to the physical well-being of a wanderer among the icebergs of the north. To keep the blood in circulation, he must keep his limbs in motion. He must rub them, and move briskly about. If he allow himself to sit down, indifferent to the result, the cold sleep of death will creep over him. The blood will freeze in his veins, will congeal in his heart, his eye will be glazed, his cheeks become rigid as those of a statue, and he will be locked in the icy embrace of death. So also with him who neglects the true spirit of worship. To be indifferent to our spiritual life, to allow our spiritual faculties to remain inactive, is to invite the torpor of spiritual death. There are too many worshippers who act as though they were looking for an open sea; the atmosphere about them is so cold, and the temperature is so exceedingly low! But worship, which is thus a necessity of our nature, cannot be forced upon

as by any unnatural method. The process of producing the spirit of worship must be natural. It will not come at the bidding of a wish. We must grow into it, or rather it must grow in us. Worship cannot be set up in the soul, as you do an organ in the church. When that is properly tuned, and the connection between pipes and keys is perfect, the bellows inflated, the stops drawn, all you have to do, is to sweep your fingers over the keys, and it gives forth beautiful, rich music. Worship cannot be thus produced. It must come more like the rich fragrance of the flower. Fill the soul by repeated efforts with the right spirit, and worship will eventually flow therefrom, as naturally as water from a clear and copious spring.

We go to the gymnasium to develop physical strength. By the use of the various contrivances there found, we may acquire a toughness and a strength of muscle truly remarkable. What may thus be done for the body, should hint to us what may be done for the spirit, by repeated and systematic effort.

The church, the assembled congregation, the rich tones of the organ, the hymns that are sung, the preaching, the spirit of devotion, mingled with prayer and praise, and rising to heaven like pure incense, are helps to develop our internal and higher life. But the helps must never be confounded with the thing to which they are to help us. They have no value whatever only so far as they contribute to the true spirit of devotion. You may worship in the grandest cathedral that was ever constructed by human hands, you may listen to the

rich tones of the most magnificent organ, hear the most impressive prayers and the most eloquent sermons that ever fell from human lips, if they arouse not within you the true spirit of devotion, they are as empty as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. We must remember that that which is within us is richer far than anything of an external nature. It is by virtue of this divine gift, that music is rendered delightful, eloquence enrapturing, and worship profitable to our souls. Man is a sort of divine musical instrument which God has constructed; and there are stops in the human soul which he at proper times draws out. There is the sweet Kerolophon, the clear Trumpet, and the deep Diapason tones of truth which God draws forth from human lips by sweeping the keys of man's immortal spirit.

The organ that stands in yonder gallery has no significance whatever, only so far as our souls respond to it, and answer to what it says. Suppose the vocal part of the organ were removed, and placed in a deep vault below this church, and the attachments and keys were left where they now are with the connection simply extended. The organist might then perform on it, the music in the vault might swell and roll in majestic grandeur, but it would have no meaning for us, it would do us no good. And why? Because our souls would not reëcho the great truth which it speaks. The music, then, is not in the organ really, but in us; in the immortal instrument which God has strung. So with worship. It is not in the church, the prayer, the hymn, the sermon, or the preacher, but it must be in our own souls,

producing spiritual harmony, and giving us increased vitality.

There is a faculty within us that answers to everything of beauty in Nature, in Art, and in Religion. What emotions are called into being by every scene of natural beauty! By the flowers, in their rich variety of hue, fragrance, and form! By the sunset, in its rainbow tints of glory! By the landscape, with its mountains and plains, with its forests and fields, its lakes and its rivers! By old Ocean, that sweeps away as far as the eye can see; at times calm and placid, at others, its multitudinous waters in wild uproar; rising and sinking, commingling and separating, rolling, swelling, and breaking upon the rock-bound shore! presenting a scene of sublimity indescribable by human language! What emotions are called into life by every true work of art! By statuary, around which genius has poured the spirit of its inspiration. By painting, that heaves with life upon the canvas. By poetry, that has been inspired by the Muses. By music, whose notes come as gently to the soul as tones from harp by angel fingers swept. What feelings are awakened by the true spirit of devotion! Worship becomes wings to the soul, by which we rise into a higher and purer region, and, leaving behind us all that is worldly, we soar to the mount of Transfiguration, where our countenances become changed, as by the light of heaven. If man never experienced such emotions, such names as Phidias and Angelo, Landseer and Turner, Homer and Shakspeare, Mozart and Bethoven, and the names of

the long line of prophets and apostles, would have passed away from the earth with the dust in which these noble spirits lived; and the truths they uttered would have remained unspoken. Our highest life does not consist in deadening our spiritual faculties, but in quickening them. Everything without that is beautiful, touches with pleasurable emotion some secret spring in the soul. By their magic influence the whole circle of our emotions should at proper times be called into action. We have no conception, as yet, of the depth of our spiritual being. Those of us who have had the largest experience, who have taken the deepest soundings, know but little of that depth, of the height and glory of its possibilities. Not until these bodies shall have been swept away by the hand of Time, and we shall be all mind—all soul in heaven, shall we enter into the full appreciation of this capacity to worship. Not until then shall we realize that joy and glory which as yet it has not entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Thus have I thrown out a few thoughts upon worship and its necessity. These, I trust, the young men of this Union, whose prosperity I so earnestly desire, may remember and heed. This Union, established in this great metropolis, must yet, in future years, exert a widespread influence over the liberal minds of the country. As you grow in numbers, your strength and influence must increase, and that influence will find its way out through every vein and artery of the nation, forced out by this great central heart to the utmost verge of the continent. I trust that the members of this Union will

cultivate the true spirit of worship, and though creed bound souls may oppose and revile you, be true to those higher and diviner principles that are within you; show to the world that the logic of a consistent life is irresistible; pray that assistance may be granted you from on high; that the spirit of Jesus Christ may accompany you wherever you go; that you may be true to yourselves, to God, and the right, and He will give you the victory.

THE CHRISTIAN SPIRIT OF REFORM.

BY HORACE GREELEY.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS: The topic assigned me for discussion this evening is "The Proper Spirit of Reform with respect to Public Evils and Personal Vices."

I have recently* had occasion to urge that the Christian is eminently a *practical* religion; that it contemplates not so much our intellectual enlightenment as our moral exaltation; that its end is not a sounder faith, but an approved state of the affections. A correct faith is important because, and only because, it conduces to a good life. It is well to study and understand the Bible, to attend on the ministrations and observe the ordinances of the Church, and to practice private or other devotion; because all these are means toward the great end of personal, essential goodness; but if my neighbor, who neglects all these, is in heart and life a better man than I who practice them, than is he truly a better Christian than I am. And if there be a Catholic, Baptist, or Quaker, nay, if there be a Mormon, Mohammedan, Pagan, or Infidel, whose heart is more imbued with love to God and man than yours or mine, and

* Address at the Anniversary of the Universalist Sunday-schools, May 11—two days previously.

whose life is more radiant with good works than either of ours, then does he, notwithstanding ours may be by far the truer and better creed, stand nearer to God than any of us: then is he, in a very important sense, a better Christian than could be chosen from among us. "By their fruits ye shall know them," is the divine test, and its application is uniform and infallible. And all creeds, all dogmas, institutions, ordinances, are to be valued or condemned precisely as they are or are not calculated to create in the human heart that state of the affections—perfect love to God and man—which it is the great end of Christianity to create and insure.

Christianity then is, of necessity, the inexorable foe of every wrong, every abuse, every law, custom, usage, or institution, that tends to injure or debase mankind. If we are called to decide whether slavery, polygamy, war, dueling, alcoholic beverages, or anything else, is consistent or inconsistent with Christianity, we need but ask, "Does it tend, in the average, to promote and diffuse love to God and man?" and the answer to this question furnishes the solution of the problem.

Christianity is, therefore, a radical, belligerent, innovating religion. It must advance, and assail, and impeach, and condemn, so long as there shall be evil to combat and good to achieve. It is at war with all shapes and shades of wrong-doing—with all that seeks personal gain or ease at the expense of general well-being. Admit that any institution, or custom, or law, tends generally to damage or debase a majority of the human beings over whom it exerts an influence, and

you have decided that Christianity is not only the adversary of that institution or custom, but that it is its uncompromising, persistent, exterminating adversary, granting no truce, and giving no quarter.

I reject and condemn, therefore, that false logic which runs thus: "Slavery, or aggressive war, or the use of intoxicating beverages, is justified, because Abraham held slaves, and Joshua waged invasive, merciless war, and Christ made and dispensed wine," etc., etc. I do not admit that Christ ever made or dispensed alcoholic, intoxicating wine; but, even if it were proved that he did, I should still say, Whatever he did or allowed, the law He gave for *my* guidance is clear and imperative. "It is good neither to eat meat, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother is offended, or is made weak," is but an amplification of that divinest precept, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, . . . and thy neighbor as thyself." I know that all intoxicating beverages produce far more misery than happiness; that they are potent instrumentalities for the demoralization and injury of mankind. Knowing this, I know that the divine law commands *me* not to use them, nor countenance their use by others; and I do not believe the divine practice is at variance with this law. "Moses, for the hardness of your hearts, permitted this; but *from the beginning it was not so*," supplies a short method whereby to refute every assumption that any form of chronic injustice, or pandering to groveling appetite, is allowed by Christianity, which, as I understand it, is Absolute Justice, Absolute Morality, im-

pelled by Universal Love. Whatsoever contravenes or comes short of this is so far un-Christian. If, then, I am asked whether Christianity condemns this or that, the above is my answer.

But, in farther elucidation of my subject, I will remark that—

1. Wrong is no less wrong because it is venerable. Prove to me that a thing has been done, and tolerated, and even sanctioned, by wise and good men, since the dawn of history, and I do not the less earnestly ask, “But what are its average influences and effects? Does it, on the whole, tend to make men wiser, better, happier? If not, it is un-Christian; and the tacit or positive approval of all the good, from Enoch to Gerrit Smith, will not make it otherwise.

2. Nor does the fact that it has entrenched itself behind laws, and received the homage of rulers, and become an institution, alter the case, except to render it a more inveterate, therefore a more formidable evil. Parents have sacrificed their children to idols, women burned themselves on the funeral pyre of their dead husbands, in strict accordance with established laws and institutions. The Inquisition has torn men in pieces with red-hot pincers under the fullest sanctions of Church and State. Christianity was vouchsafed to earth primarily to overturn and destroy laws and institutions—the conservatism of the Judean Church, the despotism of the Roman State. That work it has performed as a needed preliminary to its greater undertaking to transform and purify the souls of the human race.

But, while Christianity is the inflexible enemy of every form of evil, it is not the enemy of the evil-doer. Him it smites but to heal. It loves him too well to suffer him to persist in his vicious, criminal career. It calls alike on the drunkard and the drunkard-maker, the slave-trader and the slave-breeder, the libertine and the victim of his wiles, to repent and amend. If they disregard the summons, it enforces it by chastisements, as with Pharoah's refusal to let the children of Israel go. It inflicts penalties, because the selfish, the sensual, the abusers of power, will not otherwise be persuaded to forsake their evil ways. It inflicts penalties, not merely that they may be weaned from their evil courses, but that others may be deterred therefrom by the spectacle of their suffering. Its penalties are, therefore, exemplary as well as reformatory; but they are not vindictive. They are not inflicted as an end, but as a means. Christianity inflicts no evil for evil's sake, but as a means to higher and lasting good.

Now the State is not always able to act so palpably in this spirit, because of its imperfections—its limitations. The State cannot judge the heart—cannot determine when the desired state of the affections has been attained. It is liable to be imposed upon by hypocritic professions of penitence, and lying promises of reformation. It may love the wrong-doer intently, but be unable to trust him. It must shield the obedient citizen from the culprit's assaults and depredations, though to that end it is compelled to immure the latter in a loathsome dungeon; it must imprison in order to secure; and

sometimes, being unable securely to confine, it must scourge rather than allow the culprit to inflict wrong with impunity. Herein it prefers the lesser of two evils—that which is preferable even to evil-doers as a class, to whom no penalties can be so injurious as a fancied impunity in doing wrong. In short, the truly Christian State also punishes, to the best of its ability, not to inflict evil, but to avert such infliction or reduce it to a minimum.

To the vanquished, the good are ever merciful. The brave soldier eagerly presses his canteen to the parched lips of his wounded adversary, with whom he exchanged deadly thrusts but the moment before. The culprit, arrested, disarmed, bound, imprisoned, and completely at the mercy of the law and its ministers, is no longer a fit object of wrath any more than of fear. Men sometimes forget this; God does not. Hence, when the Prophet Jonah, deploring the failure of the Lord to destroy Nineveh, according to his unqualified announcement, sat him down, dejected and indignant, to witness the completeness of that failure, God says to him (Jonah), “Thou doest well to be angry for the gourd, that came up in a night and perished in a night; and should not I spare great Nineveh, in which there are six-score thousand persons who know not the right hand from the left, and also much cattle?”

I have no faith in bloodshed as a remedy for wrong. I believe in a gentler spirit—one that walks noiselessly into the haunts of crime, and says, “Why will ye die?”—which wins the transgressor from the way of eternal

debasement and sin into the way of truth and holiness. I believe this is the spirit, and the only spirit, which will accomplish this glorious result, and in this spirit it is our duty to war against every evil in the land.

If we could, to-day, make the criminals of New York think that they were really loved, that there were those who were deeply and earnestly interested in their well-being, it would be impossible for them to continue criminals.

If they could believe that God loved them, and good men loved them, and were laboring for their renovation, they could not be robbers, and thieves, and murderers. They hate those against whom they have offended, and they hate them on the supposition that they are hated in turn. And so long as the periodicals and journals of the land tell them that they are thus hated and depraved, and past hope of recovery—so long as this logic has its influence upon them, and they feel that they are outlaws in the Universe of God—they will remain immoral and unreformed.

But when the true spirit—the Spirit of Christ—shall irradiate the Christian world—when the laws and institutions of society shall be thoroughly permeated by that spirit—when men shall go forth manifesting this divine love in all the relations of life—when they shall take the poor and degraded by the hand, and speak to them words of Christian kindness and hope—then, I believe, the great work of reform will be commenced in a spirit which will prove irresistible. Toward that

work it is the duty and privilege of the Christian world evermore to press forward.

The genius of Christian Reform wars rather against the beginnings, the sources of evil, than their ripened fruits. It delights rather in Juvenile Temperance Societies than in Inebriate Asylums. It would rather train children to love honesty and industry, than send thieves to the State-prison. It prefers Sunday-schools to tread-mills. It rejoices more over one orphan snatched from the ways of vice and degradation, than over two murderers consigned to the gallows.

Still, imperfect as society is, corrupting as are the influences which beset so large a share of our youth, there are and must be transgressors, with whom the laws must deal sternly. The land is full of criminals, some of them native to the soil, but far more wafted to us from the unjust social conditions and decaying civilization of Europe. With these the law must deal, not harshly, but inflexibly. Its penalties should be, not savage, but sure. The prevalent cry for blood! blood! more eagerness to convict, more sanguinary inflictions, is mainly uttered by those who cherish and uphold grog-shops, and all the lewd, dissolute haunts wherein character is sapped and integrity blasted. When the community has thus been debauched and demoralized, these apostles of butchery seem to know no other remedy than the profuse shedding of blood. But history and reason alike assure us that ages of State ferocity have never been distinguished for public morality, and that a popular tendency to crime has never yet been

effectively counteracted by a profuse shedding of blood.

Such bloodshed, at all events, is not incited by the spirit of Christian Reform. That spirit combines firmness with suavity, justice with unfailing love. It is no spirit of weak compliance, of ready compromise with evil, of blind confusion of right and wrong. It simply refuses to cast out devils by Beelzebub. It realizes that the bad are hardened and confirmed in their evil courses by their belief that they are generally hated, by their conviction that they are harshly judged and widely loathed. It recognizes, in love to God, reflected in love to man, the true and vital remedy for the errors and woes of our race. It recognizes that we are all, however widely separated in intellectual and moral attainment, "members together of one body," and bows its head meekly in response to the great Apostle's searching question, "Who maketh thee to differ?" Knowing that we have all one Father, one nature, one ultimate destiny, it regards punishment but as the pruning of a tree of its dead and perverse branches in order to let in upon it the vivifying sunshine—that sunshine which beams fully upon the human soul in the evangelic assurance that God is Love.

THE TRUE GROUNDS OF CHRISTIAN UNION.

BY REV. A. D. MAYO,

Of Albany.

MR. PRESIDENT :

The people of the United States are now engaged in the pursuit of a religion under circumstances that have never before appeared. A population of thirty millions, seventy-six per cent. of which is of native white extraction, twelve per cent. of European and twelve per cent. of servile origin, is sparsely sown over an area of three million square miles. Only six hundred and fifty thousand square miles of this area are organized into free States; eight hundred and fifty thousand square miles are already in slave States; leaving more than half our immense domain still in a territorial condition. These thirty millions of people are trying to do a greater number of difficult things at once than were ever yet attempted by a nation: working to subdue an uncultivated continent, and make it fit for the residence of man; and amid the embarrassments of a mixed population, representing every phase of civilization and barbarism, endeavoring to construct a republic, which means nothing less than the reconstruction of all the institutions of society. Four hundred years ago, no ancestor of these thirty millions was on any part of

these three millions of square miles ; seventy-five years ago three or four millions occupied our Atlantic shore, and in more than half the area of our thirty-two States civilization is, practically, not fifty years old. Of course, such a people, dwelling amid these circumstances, will invariably become a material people. To subdue a wilderness, either by hard blows of the arm, or the invention and use of machinery, will necessarily produce such a concentration of the national mind on physical success as will bring every great class to the adoption of a strongly material test in every region of life. We need no dogma of natural depravity to account for the unspiritual character of our countrymen ; the Americans are a material people because they have had no time to become anything better. Thus we need not be surprised to find the twelve per cent. of our American population in a state of semi-brutish barbarism, chained to the ground they dig, by ignorance, superstition, and servile associations. Neither may we be amazed to behold a large portion of our emigrant population in a condition whose only hope of relief is in the new opportunity opened to their posterity. Neither should we be startled to learn, that of the seventy-six per cent. of our native white population, a fearful majority are honestly enslaved by the wants, toils, and aspirations, that circle about a material success. I make no unheard-of charge, I impute no singular depravity to our countrymen when I pronounce our present condition of affairs a profoundly material civilization. With the aid of the higher mind

of America, working such agencies for good as were never before organized into a national existence, we have, so far, only given the world a splendid promise ; we are still a grossly material people.

This radical materialism now decides the quality of every region of American life. Our native literature is chiefly a journalism kept alive by its connection with the commercial interests of the country. Our society is an aristocracy of wealth—in fifteen States founded on the ownership of land and men, in seventeen States on the ownership of money. Our government is practically the ruling of thirty millions by the representatives of a majority of twenty-six millions of white people, who believe in the supremacy of the white European over every other race, Asiatic, African, or North American. Our business is organized selfishness : “Look out for number one,” is the golden rule of Labor in the United States. And, necessarily, when such a people attempt to mould a national religion, its materialism will become evident in every creed and church.

Probably a full third of the inhabitants of the United States neither profess a religion, nor attend regularly on the ministrations of any church. The remainder are divided among some five-and-twenty sects, most of which are of foreign origin ; only two or three of native growth. But the creeds of these sects, though nominally resembling those of great denominations abroad, are quite another thing in the minds of the people who accept them here. They are modified

by the materialism, the independent habits of life, the absence of a State-Church, and all the indescribable influences that make us what we are. So the creeds of American sects are only a remote indication of their condition, mentally or morally. Our religious sects are great voluntary parties, rallied on platforms, kept together by essentially the same means as the political parties are sustained. When a sect is running behind, it organizes a "revival." When a number of sects are desirous of enlarging their boundaries, they unite in a great effort to arouse the people, and divide the converts among each other. If we look at the operations of American sects from a theological point of view, we shall be involved in confusion; their creeds do not explain their life. If we look at them as illustrations of the national temperament, culture, condition, we can understand much that now puzzles both doctors and people.

Now we have in the United States thousands of religious men and women, *i. e.*, thousands of people who fully understand our national materialism and all its results, and whose highest and sincerest wish in life is to spiritualize man, and bring our country and the world under the influence of the Law of Love. These religious people are found in every sect, and outside all sects; believing all theologies or no scheme of theology. We cannot identify them with the few millions of Church members; the Church has a share of them; the "world," so called, *i. e.*, the twenty millions of Americans who are not Church members, has its share. The

chief practical question to this country now is, *How can we unite these religious people to make head against the national materialism, and elevate the Republic to a more spiritual civilization founded on the Christian Law of Love?*

There are now three prominent methods before the people of the United States for accomplishing this purpose.

The Roman Catholic Church, which probably ranks third or fourth of the Christian sects in the number of its adherents, advances its own pretensions to an exclusive sanctity, and proclaims but one possible mode of Christian union: *Belief in the Roman Catholic Church. Belief in the religious authority of an ecclesiastical institution*, is her mode of uniting the religion of the country against the materialism of the nation. But this pretension will not be accepted, because it contains an assertion of human authority which, if logically carried out, would destroy republican institutions, and subvert the very idea of the natural rights of man. Spiritual authority underlies all other. If the Church of Rome has the divine right to give a religion to the people of America, all American institutions will practically be constructed at Rome; for, call it what you will, no government can preserve the natural rights of man, which is made and managed by a people who look to a central priesthood as the depositary of religious authority. This Church cannot bring in those religious people who believe in spiritual and political freedom. Its only union is the union of one sort of religionists to

deny that another sort of religionists are Christians ; which is no Christian union at all.

The Protestant "Evangelical" Church, comprising a large proportion of the Protestant sects, has proposed another basis of union: *The acceptance of a certain theory of religion called the "Evangelical Plan of Salvation."* All who accept this theory of salvation are Christians, all outside not Christians. Hence this Protestant "Evangelical" Church proclaims that there has been a perfect union of the Christian Church in the late revival "Union Prayer-meetings;" in its "Evangelical Alliance," and its "Young Men's Christian Association." It commands America to rally on the platform of the "Evangelical Plan of Salvation," and thus save each man from eternal perdition, and the country from an unchristian civilization.

But the fatal defect in this, as in the Roman Catholic idea, is, that it leaves out so large a part of the Christian world. More than half the professed believers of Christianity in the world cannot accept this "evangelical" Protestantism, and are ignored by the Protestant "Evangelical" Church. This Church may assert that this immense number of persons, with the millions who do not belong to any church, are out of the pale of salvation—that doesn't make it so. And while the most complete representative institution of this evangelicism in America, the American Tract Society, continues to sustain the greatest scandal on the Western Continent, we may be pardoned for suggesting a revival of the Christian graces of modesty, humility and charity

in the judgment of the world by this conceited Church. The truth is, this Protestant "Evangelical" Church is in the same chronic delusion as its enemy, the Roman Catholic Church; it can propose no plan of Christian union which will include the Christians of the country. Its only idea of union is the conspiracy of a few sects to take the kingdom of heaven by violence; monopolize its honors and rewards in this world and the world to come; and either compel the rest of mankind to come into its arrangement, or be turned into everlasting perdition—a proceeding which the American people, with due respect to the undeniable merits of this Church, begs leave respectfully to decline, and further to intimate, that it is not at all alarmed about the eternal consequences of a refusal to accede to the pretensions of an ecclesiasticism that assumes to be God's vicegerent to the United States of America.

There is one more method of uniting the religious people of America: *Union on religious character, with diversity of creed and institution.* This method asserts that the religious people of America are those who live holy lives, founded on love as the supreme principle of character. It says to every soul: Consult your own spirit, and decide for yourself what you are. If your best reason and conscience command you to war against selfishness and materialism in self and neighbor, and help lift this people up to a spiritual life, come forward, and unite with other like-minded men in Christian living and doing good. Your creed is your best wisdom concerning life; give us the benefit of all the light you

have on religion and between us all there shall be a mutual desire to know the truth. Let there be free thought, free expression, free discussion on every doctrine of religion; but let not that individual independence prevent coöperation on the basis of character and religious conduct. For religion is first, theology second. Let us unite in living for God and man, and on the broad field of right-doing rally and move forward to attack the sin of this nation and of the world.

The necessity of this plan of Christian Union is shown from the fact that the progress of cultivation is making it every year more difficult for men to unite on an exclusive creed or institution. As people become more enlightened, they differ more widely in individual theories and personal tastes on a theme so vast as religion. We can have no union on a creed, or an ecclesiastical institution in a high state of culture, unless we choose to imitate the German method, where men swear fidelity to an ecclesiastical establishment, preach its creed, and administer its ceremonies to the people, and advocate their own private system in books written for the learned; a state of things that can be only temporary anywhere, because based on falsehood.

We are, therefore, driven for our only hope of union to a basis of Christian character as the test of religion, permitting every soul to answer to its own conscience the decisive questions of life. But is it said that belief in some creed is essential to this very Christian character? Nobody denies that opinion is a vital part of character; but when we begin to determine how much

belief, and what dogmas, are essential to a life of love, we fall into a confusion that only increases as men become more intelligent; since the intellect is the very fountain of diversity. But the conscience and the affections are the fountain of all the union possible among men; and if the race is to become one family, it must be one in the bonds of a loving fidelity to duty. In proportion as a man puts religion above theology, his sense of obligation can be relied on; and to deny the worth of character on the ground of mental difference, is simply to be ruled by a mischievous intellectual conceit.

Is it said a man must believe in Jesus Christ to be a Christian? *Believe what of Jesus Christ?* is the question that now divides Christendom. As the world moves away from the age of Jesus, private opinions about him will multiply; every wise man is now obliged to construct his own image of Jesus Christ from the records of his life, and the observation of his influence on civilization. But the greatest service of Christianity has been to lift society to a higher place, and fill modern institutions more and more with its own blessed principle of love. So every child now born and educated in a Christian land has Jesus Christ wrought into his character, just in proportion as his associates resemble Jesus; and we may even conceive that one may grow up into a life of Christian love by the force of such private and public examples, and be like Christ, while his intellect may fail to detect the original fountain of that influence that fertilizes society. Men are not made by their private theories, so much as by the spiritual atmosphere of the

society in which they live; and when America has realized the law of love, Americans will be educated by the spirit of the age into the likeness of the matchless character of Jesus, while every mind will form its own honest theory of who Jesus was. To deny this, seems to me to ignore the chief merit of Christianity in shaping the popular life of modern society, and to attach more importance to a man's opinion than to the man himself.

This objection is also disposed of by an appeal to facts already existing. We have this union now in all the great practical reforms of the day. Men and women of all creeds meet on the platforms of these movements, act together, and produce great results. We have it in private life. Neighbors unite for charitable enterprises, people join hands to do any pressing duty, and are not harmed, but elevated thereby. This decides the possibility of union on the basis of love to God and man. I suppose it must come gradually, as all good things are of slow growth. The practical progress of the idea will probably be somewhat in this wise: 1st. Every great moral crisis in national or social affairs will concentrate good men and women of every creed, or church, on one platform of moral effort. 2d. Having thus become acquainted with each other's worth of character, there will be a growing tendency among those who have acted together to compare opinions, and we shall have conventions for the comparison of views where the love of truth will preside, and mutual respect conduct the high debate. 3d. The people of many communities will soon be driven to the alternative of no public worship

of God, or a church composed of all the inhabitants of the place who care to worship; a church without a doctrinal creed; a collection of people united to help each other, live holy lives, and gain the highest wisdom; where both pulpit and pews are free, and all conspire to elevate and spiritualize the private and public mind.

Each of these things has already been successfully done. The petition of three thousand New England clergymen, of all existing Christian sects, against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, was an indication of what the Christian Church can do for public morality. That petition made "the heathen rage," beyond all the late demonstrations of our organized Christianity, and was therefore proven to be a "revival" in the right direction. In various parts of this country, able thinkers have met and compared views on religion; always to the building up of charity, and the enlightenment of the people. Many neighborhoods have been already obliged to establish a church practically on the basis proposed by this method, and such churches are a blessing to the country.

Indeed, there are but two obstacles to such union—bigotry and wickedness. If all men held their opinions in a spirit of reverence for truth and their fellow-beings, they would be willing to aid each other in the search for divine wisdom. If all men loved goodness better than sin, they would find their highest sympathy in character. Thus the growth of man in enlightened love of truth and spirituality of life must produce this union, which I suspect will be all of which we are capable in

this world. I do not hope the American people will ever worship according to the same form. I do not believe there will ever again be so few religious creeds as now ; but I do hope and believe, as the great desire of my life, that the union of the good men and women of America, for all great practical religious enterprises, for the increase of religious knowledge, for that central unity of moral purpose which underlies a Christian civilization, will come to pass ; and its appearance will be the test of the advancing success of the Republic.

This method of union is our only hope of a vital Theology. Our theologians are now the advocates of great exclusive sects which fix their premises in unyielding creeds, and command them at the risk of the penalty for heresy to think within their circle. Thus we have little independent theology. The divines think as the Puritan Fathers worshipped, with their guns stacked outside the church, and a watch set to cry out when savages appeared. In the solitude of the dustiest library these men hear the fierce growlings of the Philistines of sectarianism outside, and they cannot write a line from their better self, or look at their own thoughts on divine things, except at the risk of provoking a theological mob, which, led by sacerdotal bullies, drags them up to the mount of public observation, fastens them to the cross before thirty millions of people, writes "*Infidel*" over their head, and leaves ecclesiastical hatred and popular fanaticism to crucify them after the approved American fashion. But could men learn to rate religion above theology, and encourage free

thought, then the science of divinity would be born in America, and we might revise the creed of the ages, and, by the aid of our new experience, mightily help the world in its progress towards the highest wisdom.

And is there any question that such union on the basis of character would elevate the religious condition of our nation? What hinders the religious people of America now from combining against wickedness in that unity of love to God and man which is the basis of all true piety and morality? One great obstacle is sectarian jealousy. Another is the influence of partisan priests, who know if their people are once led up to these high elevations of spiritual union, they will be so ravished by the inspiring sight, that they cannot be marched down hill again to be quartered in the barracks of the sects. Another is the intolerance of church corporations (a mixture of ecclesiastical and commercial bigotry much more violent than either alone). These sacred corporations love power as well as secular corporations, and the worst specimen of lobbying it has been my lot to witness in the State-house, at Albany, was in behalf of the vested privileges of Trinity Church Corporation, in the city of New York. These corporations don't intend to let off their employees and followers to do the work of humanity, but propose to keep them to perpetuate their own overgrown power. We all know the disgraceful attitude into which the organized Christianity in America has fallen from lack of such union. What could not have been done these last six months had the religious people united to check-

mate the Devil of Despotism in Washington? Suppose a union for the rights of man, such as we have seen for the "revival" of the Protestant "Evangelical" sects. Why, it could have put President, Cabinet, Court, and Congress in the focus of such a moral indignation, that these our servants would never have dared to trifle with liberty. But who can wonder that our servants have "high life below stairs," while we, the masters and mistresses, have left the American house in their charge, and gone off on a voyage of discovery to verify the "evangelical" map of the hereafter. We can have no union for practical religion, only a union for "salvation," meaning by salvation an increase of Protestant "Evangelical" Church members. The result of all this is that the Government has been left to do an act whose enormity and wickedness is quite eclipsed by the littleness of its craft; while the Revival sends its representative, "The American Tract Society," to New York, this week, to endorse the publication of Tracts on the duties of Sambo and Toney, under the present indefinite circumstances of those individuals; driven out of the field of American citizenship by Catholic Taney, only to be spirited away to the negro's heaven, by Protestant Adams and Bethune.

But there is to be an end of all this sham Christianity. A true union will surely come. The Church sees it coming. The most popular side of the Church, the Protestant "Evangelical" sects, are obliged to bow to a rising spirit they fear to offend. This Church is obliged this year to proclaim that her "revival" is a

“union of all Christians;” that it is not a ministers’ revival, but a “business-men’s prayer meeting;” is not a fanatical excitement, like those which have kept this Church alive in the past, but “calm and matter of fact.” Neither of these assertions are true in any large sense, but they are a tribute to the Christian common-sense of the people. Next year the people won’t take their tribute in these fine words; but the Church must do a good deal more than talk revival to keep its fifty thousand converts, and retain its best members, already wavering, in the quandary to stay and save organized evangelicism, or go and save the American people. There is a rising Christian public opinion, the blended sense of the noblest part of our country, that will sacrifice without benefit of clergy every church that makes a creed or an ecclesiasticism the test of religion. The Romish Church plead its *Catholicism*, but long ago the jury saw through that plea, and the Roman Catholic Church is now in the hands of the sheriff, with no prospect of executive clemency. The great American Protestant sects have put in the plea of *Evangelicism*, and the jury are now hearing its cause. The counsel made a bad point at the Tract Anniversary yesterday, but the American people is slow to anger, long-suffering, and easy to forgive the penitent; and if this Church will concede the right to think, declare religion to be love to God and man, and lead a holy crusade against the sins of the people, it will gain a lease of life; if not, sentence of death is sure, and the day of execution will come. Another group of sects and societies are now putting in

the plea of *Liberalism*. It is a word dear to the American heart; but the loudest profession will not blind the jury. If this new Church makes a creed or an institution the test of character, it will follow its predecessors to death. When shall we learn that America needs none of these churches for her salvation? She can use any of them while they serve her purpose; but she needs only a Christianity, broad and profound, practical and devout, that can rally all good men and women, fill them with a sublime hope for the coming of God's kingdom on earth, and lead them against the despotism, ignorance, superstition, and materialism of the land, as victoriously as the morning light invades the realm of sleep and dreams.

Young men of this "Christian Union," I learn that you are smitten with the exalted ambition to represent this idea. This, your first public anniversary in the metropolis of that State which leads the executive power of our country, is to me significant of the times. I know not whether it is to be given to you to lead in this great ingathering of the forces of a spritual, against a material civilization. It is a post to which only the noblest may aspire; for the way is long and the toil is hard, and foes slumber in the future more dangerous than those that now beset your early march. But God help you to try; and whatever comes of your effort be assured a watchful Providence will permit nothing worth saving to be lost, but will mould the permanent results of your best endeavor into another stone, and lay it on the rising walls of that Temple of Humanity which abideth for evermore.

WOMAN IN CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION.

BY THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON,

Of Worcester, Mass.

MR. PRESIDENT, AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—Counting this invitation as an honor, as I do, I count the subject assigned me, “Woman in Christian Civilization,” as a greater one. But hard as it is to crowd into a few moments, anything worthy of saying on that question which is agitating this age as no other has; that question which has so lately enlisted, in your own city, the keen insight of Mr. Brady, the strong rhetoric of Dr. Chapin, the culture and the chivalry of Curtis, and the voice of Lucy Stone, that voice “gentle and low, an excellent thing in woman,” yet strong enough to have been heard from Maine to California, and across the Atlantic: hard as this is, I am proud to be asked to do it.

I remember once a certain preacher in Massachusetts thought it necessary to explain, on one occasion, why he made special mention of woman’s existence in his pulpit, contrary to the usual proprieties of the place. “It is because,” said he, “the fact is, that among the redeemed, up to this date, the immense majority are undoubtedly women.” I expected some magnificent conclusion from premises so striking, and unquestionable, and was a

little disappointed when the reverend gentleman went on at last to demonstrate, that the church, to which he ministered, was greatly in need of a central chandelier; and perhaps the ladies of the congregation would be so kind as to get up a little Fair, and pay the price by pin cushions. I speak from the same premises, I trust with larger conclusions.

He is idle, she is idler, who attributes to any temporary excitement the great and gradual movement in these times, which assigns to woman her equal position in the future, as man has had his predominance in the past. For want of this movement, for ages, a minor key of sadness has run through all the words and works of woman. No man can ever speak of the position of woman so mournfully as she has done it for herself. Charlotte Bronte, Caroline Norton, and indeed the majority of intellectual women, from the beginning to the end of their lives, have touched us to sadness even in their mirth. And the mournful memory of Mrs. Siddons, looking back upon years when she had been the chief intellectual joy of English society, could only deduce one hope, "that there might be some other world hereafter, where justice would be done to woman."

It is not alone in the great tragedies of life; it is more in the unseen and private sorrows; it is more in the prosperous classes than in the unprosperous; it is more among women who make no complaint, than among the complainants, that we see the wrongs in the position of woman. The life, the ordinary life of single

women in the community—their life from eighteen years to their wedding day, what is it in tens of thousands of cases, but one long petty tragedy! A life reputed blameless indeed, but also aimless; a life without a noble hope, without a large enjoyment, without an earnest purpose! It is impossible that the soul should be satisfied with what society gives young girls as the solid material of their lives, dancing parties, a crochet-needle, the last new novel, and the occasional amateur manufacture of rather indigestible sponge-cake. The soul demands an object, or it dies. This emptiness of life, to unmarried women, has led again and again to insanity and premature decline, for which the doctors could find no sufficient reason. Every man knows it, whose position has given him the confidence of woman. Again and again have I been asked by women, almost with tears in their eyes—persons who had everything that fortune could give them—"Do not merely preach to us resignation, but point out to us some object in existence." How hard it was to answer.

What is education, what all the varied culture of modern times to a perplexity like this? It is only giving wings to a caged bird. I remember a young friend of mine, now a happy and successful school-teacher, who was asked by a companion some years since, "why it was she was so unwilling to leave school?" "I don't want to leave school," was the answer, "because then I shall not have anything to do." "Nothing to do!" was the astonished answer. "Why can't you stay at home, and make pretty little things to wear, as other girls

do?" It was a correct description. "It is a sad thing to me," said another accomplished female teacher, "to watch my fine girls after they leave school, and see the intellectual expression die out of their eyes, for want of an object to employ it." I once heard a mother say, "I have not thought much on this subject, but I know this: my daughters are more gifted than my sons, more cultivated, have higher aspirations, yet it seems to me, when I think of it, that my girls live, all the year round, very much the sort of life that my boys do when they come back from college, for a few weeks of relaxation. I like it well enough in my boys for a week or two at a time, but I should be ashamed to have brought them into the world if they lived so permanently."

Again, and again, in different forms this problem comes before us. It is a transition age. The old employments of woman are passing by. Lowell does the work of the spinning-wheel. The sewing machine is annihilating the needle, and society is to solve a new problem in the position of women. I pass over the darker aspects of her existence. I say nothing of the crime which fills our streets, of domestic tyranny and sensuality—of the woman whose life, at first happy, is wrecked by the baseness of manhood, and who then turns to the laws which should protect her, and finds the law worse than the husband. For it is but a few years since laws were repealed, of which that Vermont statute was a specimen, which confiscated to the State half the property of every childless widow, thinking that the State could probably find better use for it than she.

But I speak now rather of that more common position of the woman, who, cradled in comfort or luxury, finds no place in life for her energies, and has to take her chance for existence in the choice between a husband and nothing; and as some one has said—that is often a chance between two nothings. And yet these women thus wasted and weary, what is there in existence which they might not claim? What place in the universe that they might not nobly fill?

As women are now educated, their whole lives are dependent and accidental. I said to a physician once, speaking of a certain woman who had been under his care, "How great she was in that emergency." "Don't you know," said he, "that all women are great in emergencies?" And so it is; they are. But emergencies do not come to all; and those who are thus great when they come, are not educated to create them. I take it, every woman that ever lived had wings enfolded in her being, and it was only time and circumstances which decided whether she should prove an angel or a moth. Every woman becomes a Madonna by the cradle of her first-born child; and other things may ennoble her also. I have seen a fashionable beauty who seemed as if she thought butterflies were only made that she might imitate them in the waving lustre of her garments; I have seen her forget all that gorgeousness, and throw herself down in the miry street to save a beggar-child from the horses of an omnibus. From the other extreme of society, I have seen a woman who seemed utterly lost and degraded—I have seen that

woman mount guard like a lioness in defence of her younger sister, not yet fallen like herself. It is so, often; the heroism and power are there, only grant the emergency. But this is not enough.

We do not educate a man to be great in emergencies only; we ask that he shall have manhood in him, that he shall create his emergency for himself; that he should not wait for victory to come to him; he should, like Napoleon's marshal, be "victory organized." We must train woman to meet the same demand.

A good instance of the reserved power in woman, has been her demeanor during the civil wars in Kansas. I asked, as you did, again and again, from the returning Kansas emigrants, "How do the men bear themselves in this scene of danger? still more, how do the women bear it?" And the invariable answer was, "they bear it even better than the men." Afterwards it was my fortunate lot to visit Kansas when the civil wars were but just subsiding, and to see these women before the glow had faded off their cheeks, and the heroism had left their eyes. I saw the very woman who taught her school in the city of Lawrence, on the day of the Missouri invasion, and kept the children quiet at their books, the very next door to the burning hotel, because they were safer inside than out. I saw another young girl who had gone alone among an army of two thousand, encamped around the ruins of her homestead; she went to save some of her father's property, and returned uninjured, and she told me the story above the still-smoking embers. I saw the calm women, who, the Sunday pre-

vicious, were engaged in making bullets, in sight of that same invading army. I saw a woman who had remained in her lonely prairie dwelling, with her sick children after it was necessary to board up the lower windows, leaving no communication to the house, but by a ladder to be lowered or withdrawn, as friends or foes might come by—remained there till she was burnt out by the assailants. I saw these women, and I heard but one testimony in all that region; “the women, in a crisis like this, are braver than the men.”

That crisis has passed, the immediate danger is over, and how have the men of Kansas reasoned on the proper sphere of woman? Have they, after her work was done, bowed courteously to her, as we ministers who have fairs to pay for chandeliers, bow the ladies out courteously, and put the money in our pockets? Did they dismiss them thus? If they did, it, at least, was very near being otherwise. For it is only a few days since I received a letter from the Secretary of the Leavenworth Constitutional Convention, in which he says: “A half dozen more votes would have turned the scale, and women would have shared the suffrage of men of Kansas, as they have shared their dangers before.” That was their experience of woman.

Now, we talk of Kansas as a battle-field, but I tell you, New York this night has within its borders a thousand battle-fields more momentous than Lawrence or Ossawatamie. Women must claim, here as well as there, her full culture, her full remuneration, legal rights, political enfranchisement. There is not a woman who

hears me, who cannot, if she wishes, in addition to those home duties which God has put first for her, enlarge her soul until she does even those better, by participation in cares and objects outside. There is not a woman here who cannot find in the existing position of womanhood an object to work for. We see how much is already gained. But how has it been gained? By work; and that work done with no pay but hard names. Yet every concession only suggests a further demand. What is it to give woman a schooling, if you make her education stop where the real education of her brother begins? What is it to give woman wider employment, unless in this employment you proportion her wages to her work, and don't give her work harder than man's with one quarter of the remuneration? What is it to woman, if better laws are passed here and there for her protection, if still the clergyman binds her to obey—thank God she don't keep the pledge—and the lawyer assures her that man and wife are one, and that *one* is the husband!

To reform these things the impulse must come from woman herself. Men judge of women as they personally see them. How can you expect a man to honor womanhood, if you do your utmost to dishonor it by wickedness or frivolity? How can you expect any man to labor for the elevation of those who spurn at the very laborers, and take pains to explain to the world, that they themselves, at least, are not "strong minded;" as if anybody supposed they were! How can any man reverence womanhood beyond the personal experience

of his own household? I do not need to visit a man to see what his domestic relations are; I can talk to him about the rights and powers of woman, and his answer gives me the true daguerreotype of his sister, wife, mother, daughter. How can he get beyond the standard of Thackeray—every woman weak or wicked—if he can only judge from a wife, who knows nothing in the universe beyond her cooking-stove; and a daughter who has not much experimental acquaintance with even that?

On the other hand, what tales of mesmerism or alchemy can fitly symbolize the power of a noble woman over him who loves her? The tale of Undine is only half the story. Dryden's story of Cymon and Iphigenia needs to be placed beside it. Woman not merely finds her own soul through love, but gives it to her lover. Woman has this mighty power—when will she use it nobly? There are thousands to-day who are looking out of their loneliness, their poverty or their crime, for the new age, when women shall be truer to themselves, than men have ever been to women; the new age of higher civilization, when moral power shall take the place of brute force, and peace succeed to war.

A new age is coming for woman, as sure as the law of gravitation. Every demand now made by the strongest advocate for her equality will be fulfilled. What is now called fanaticism will one day be simple common sense. Every claim for her culture, every desire for her employment or enfranchisement; it is all coming, it

is all there, none of us can prevent it, while every woman can do so much—more than any man—to promote it. And oh, if my voice, a stranger's voice, can reach one woman's heart within these walls, may this, at least, be the result of its imploring, that she who cannot yet join in the new claims now made for woman, may, in bare justice to her sex, remain neutral. Let her, if she will lift no hand for helping, at least, have the generosity to refrain from opposing those, who, this day, in a neighboring hall, are casting down reputation, friends, time, wealth, casting them all down, that they may be made living stones in that temple of the future of "Woman in Christian Civilization."

CHRISTIAN UNION.

BY REV. C. MIEL,

Of France.

MY CHRISTIAN BROTHERS:—It has been kindly proposed to me to address you either in French or English. Although my knowledge of your language is very imperfect, I will endeavor to speak it so that all may understand me. Never mind if my words sound barbarous to your ears; I shall be satisfied if they find some echo in your souls.

Now, brothers, of what shall I speak to you who have been until this moment unknown to me? And first, where am I? whom do I address? This is, I am told, an anniversary of the *Young Men's Christian Union*. CHRISTIAN UNION! but is not this the sweetest of my dreams, the most cherished of my thoughts, the happy conclusion of my trials, the great work to which I am anxious to devote all my faculties and life? Oh, thank God! thank God! there is now, there is here a Christian Union!

I have considered that multitude of sects which are called Christian; and when I looked amongst them for the sign by which Christ intended his disciples to be distinguished, what did I find? Instead of love which unites,

creeds which divide. "No," they say, "Christianity is not love, love for all, it is faith; faith here to this, there to that, and somewhere else to some other thing. Christianity is orthodoxy. And when I asked what is orthodoxy, the answer was always the same. "Orthodoxy is my doxy; heterodoxy is the doxy of others." And the practice also was the same; orthodoxy everywhere religiously hating, cursing heterodoxy: each sectarian endeavoring to hollow a hell for the one who dares to think differently from himself, and sometimes not satisfied with eternally damning a brother Christian, but persecuting and torturing him to the death for the greatest glory of God! And that would be religion, that would be Christianity!

No, no! Christ has taught it, and you, brothers, have understood it, otherwise.

Religion is union; Christianity is Christian union!

Union; that is to say, a common tendency towards a common centre, the Infinite Being from whom all proceeds and to whom all returns, the one great God!

Christian Union; that is to say, a common aspiration of all Christians together to the Supreme Perfection, and an incessant endeavor to attain that perfection according to the Word of the Master himself: "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect."

What! can man ever attain the infinite perfection of God? No; but he can approach it every day more and more. The law of his life is a perpetual ascent towards the permanent principle of all life; a perpetual growing in God; and finally, a union with God!

And as no union is possible without love, as love is the very energy which alone can accomplish union, therefore, all Christianity is resolved in one word—"Love." Love God with all the powers of your soul, and love every man as yourself; for every man is like a part of yourself, and must at last become, like you, one with God: "Father, let them be one, as thou art in me and I in thee; let them be one in us." Such is religion, such is Christianity.

Let us not confound it, as so many do, with the various forms under which it has been disguised. They are the work of man; they must die with him; they are the garments which time wears away, but the spirit lives for ever. The Divine germ ever buds anew, and knows no decay; and it is thus understood that Christianity is unalterable. It is the first and last law of humanity; for, beyond God, there is nothing which can be proposed to man as his end. For that great command of being perfect like God can never be exhausted, neither in this life, or throughout all eternity; but man must go from truth to truth, from justice to justice, from virtue to virtue, from love to a deeper love; always wiser, always purer, always holier, always happier, always nearer to his God, never stopping on that royal way.

And that great destiny of each of us, my friends, may be said to be also the destiny of society. Christ is not only the Saviour of man, he is the Saviour of mankind; and mankind, like man, must ascend to God, that is to say—to perfection, to union, by an endless progress, by

a perpetual development. As man must become one with his brother, so families with families, so nations with nations must become one, and, ultimately realize, under the eye of God, an immense unity.

It is true, that divine work of the infusion of the Christian Spirit into society is slow, very slow. Eighteen centuries have passed, O Christ, since thou proclaimedst thy sacred doctrine, since thou sealedst it with thy blood! Eighteen centuries since generations transmit it to each other, and profess to believe in it, and, alas if we look to human societies, even in the most enlightened countries, do not we find them still half governed by pagan laws? Where is that equality, that liberty, that fraternity, that *solidity* which thou taughtest to be the irrefragable law of the human race? What do we see almost everywhere but the tyrannical domination of a few and the servitude of all others, oppressed either in the name of force, or under the insolent pretext of a superiority of nature? What do we see in the old continent but kings, emperors, pontiffs despots of all names, leaning upon the world with all the weight of their pride and rapacity? What do we see even here in this land of promise, whose destiny is so wonderful, if not betrayed—what do we see in the United States of America but millions of men the property of a few masters, to whom they belong as their cattle, by whom they are treated as their oxen, and how often not so well? Oh, Christ! how long the poor, the oppressed, the cursed, the slaves, both of soul and body, how long all these our brothers, thy brothers,

must they be trampled under foot? How long must they wait for relief and deliverance? shall the cry of their distress always vainly arise to Heaven?

No! the time at last is at hand. Listen, hark! in the depths of society that mysterious murmur which announces resurrection; hark, that noise like that of chains which break; look, how thrones shake, how all tyrants, political and spiritual, tremble and wither with affright, as by a presentiment that their end is near. Remark, on the other side, how the weak raise their heads, how all people begin to feel they are indeed brothers, how they league in secret against their oppressors; how, preparing themselves for the great and decisive battle of liberty, they startle with hope and joy, for they know the future is theirs. Yea, in this hour the horizon is dark with tempest; but look afar to the East, and you will perceive arising the luminous cloud which foretells the coming of the Kingdom of God!

You have been amongst the first to discern it, young men. Is not this very meeting a beginning of its realization? I congratulate you upon it. Oh! happy are you, who are called to precede the generation in their way towards the blessed unity! Happy are you, who from your early years have enjoyed the liberty of the children of God! Happy are you, who, without any serious obstacle either from men or institutions, may pursue your course towards the true, the good and the beautiful! Happy are you, who, have such guides as those who stand upon this platform; so wise as to

know surely the way, so liberal as to show it to you unhesitatingly, so virtuous as to walk manfully in advance of you. Oh! how different it is in other countries I might speak of! There every soul is born a slave. Education tends to enslave it still more; to degrade it, so far as to make it love its slavery, embrace its chains. Oh! is it not a wonder that a poor human being, now and then, should, in such conditions, succeed in freeing himself. A simple aspiration for liberty he must hide as a shameful crime. No one to guide him, no one to encourage him; but obstacles of all kinds, sacrifices of all that, after truth, is dearest to a noble heart. Ah! brother allow me to say so; I can tell of that slavery of the soul, for I have borne it almost thirty years of my life. I can tell of the anguish of such a birth to liberty, for I have been five long years suffering it. Oh! how long, how rough, how wearying has been the road to join you! Now, at last, we are together, God be praised. Let us go on firmly, not looking backward; let us advance, as far as in us lies, the grand work of our Christian Union.

In the first age of Christianity, you are aware what served the most to propagate the Gospel—what most struck the heathen. It was not the marvels done by the Apostles; it was not the admirable constancy of the martyrs. It was the love of the New Christians for each other. “Look how they love one another,” said they. Let us endeavor that all those who do not yet partake of our ideas may say the same of us: “Look how they love one another.” More than that, let us endea-

vor, that they may say: "Look how they love God ; look how they love the truth of God ; look how they love all the children of God ; look how they love all mankind." If so, brothers, courage. The coming generation belongs to us.

INFLUENCE OF THEOLOGICAL THEORIES UPON THE PRACTICAL CONDUCT OF LIFE.

BY HENRY W. BELLOWS, D.D.

MR. PRESIDENT: I cannot promise any special adherence to the subject which I am announced to discuss; for I desire to receive the inspiration of my speech, more from the immediate presence of this audience, than from the reflections of my own study, and shall endeavor to reflect, as far as possible, articulated and duly emphasized, the under-thoughts of those whom I am here to address.

I suppose everybody is asking inwardly: What is this new movement which we represent? What is it we are trying to do? What has brought us here? What is it that makes this collection of Liberal Christians, so called, different from the ordinary collections of Christians which the current week has brought together! What is the New York Young Men's Christian Union? Why are we interested in it? What does it stand for? The Young Men's Christian Union is a representative body; perhaps it does not yet very well know itself what it stands for. I take it, Liberal Christianity has not yet come to a full understanding of itself—what it is and what brought it here. For it did not come by

man ; it came by God, and we humbly sit at the feet of the Holy Spirit to inquire what it is God would have us to do as liberal Christians.

For one, I do not wish to be separated from the great body of the Christian Church. I don't like a peculiar position and situation ; to be cut off from a larger and joined to a smaller body, with which social communion is denied. I don't like that attitude ; but here I am, and not by any will of my own. I am here by the pressure of certain thoughts, and convictions, and experiences, and by the will of God. I can't be otherwise than here ; and, so help me God, here I must stand and inquire what it is that God means for me to do as a liberal Christian.

There is another association of young men—The Christian Association. Why have you come out from that body ? Why do you not go and join yourselves to that association ? And more generally still, why have not the Liberal Christians whom this Union represents been content to merge themselves in the general religious life of this country, and to act with the vast majority of the sober and devout people of the land, instead of coming out from among them, and having churches, organizations, aims, and ends of their own ?

You do not go for the same reason that we do not join ourselves to that great evangelical body which that association represents, because we are a new birth, and represent new ideas, which we have not contrived, but which God has forced into our souls, and made us represent. We do not think as they think, and therefore we

cannot be with them. Now, how is it that we do not think as they think, and feel as they feel? They are the representatives of that fixed condition of religious things in which the Church has been staying, or trying to stay, for centuries. They are working upon that old platform, and pronounce it whole. For many purposes it is whole. All persons who can comfortably and intelligently stand upon that platform, God not putting into their hearts a sense of its narrowness, may find an honest and happy foundation there, and are bound to stand there just as long as the old will hold them; and only to come on the new, when they cannot remain there any longer. This gives me sympathy for the old and that which represents the Young Men's Christian Association.

I am not going to be so silly as to ignore the great body of Christendom; nor am I so foolish as to suppose all they believe is error. I think what they *stand* on is true; but what they *say* they stand on is not true, or, at least, I do not see it to be true. They are not troubled with the doubts that have troubled us. They are able to believe two things, which are called the two fundamentals of Protestantism—the absolute authority or plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, the mysterious efficacy of the blood of Christ. I suppose these ideas are really very important ideas, and if you can get down to the root of what they mean, you can get at what we mean.

But why does the Christian world cling to the doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and

the blood of Christ as efficacious in man's salvation? It is on account of its distrust of human reason, in short, of the human soul. It says, the human soul is dark and ignorant. Reason is merely human; there is no reliance upon it; we must have something that we can rely upon. If reason is dark, and unsafe, and untrustworthy, and all that man knows of himself is purely human, then they are right in saying they must have something outside the soul. If I distrusted the soul of man; if I regarded reason as a mere human thing, I should cling with the grip of death to the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. I must have something to rely upon; and therefore this clinging to the Bible as something truer than the human soul itself, is a sound instinct of orthodoxy. And until it comes to trust the human soul, and believes that reason is divine, and not human, and that which can be depended upon in our moral and intellectual nature, the world will stand by the inspiration of the Scriptures, and it ought to.

I need not remind you that this doctrine was made a fundamental doctrine when that other doctrine which for ages had performed its duty and stood for it, was outgrown, and abandoned by Luther—the infallibility of the Pope, or of the Church.

But what is the one spiritual necessity which both these shapes of plenary inspiration express? A necessity of some final and complete authority in religion. So long as Christians had the infallible Church, they could dispense with the unerring Scriptures. But is

there not a third kind of plenary inspiration which is more radical than either of the others—a purer, more sacred, and more credible sort—which must as inevitably take the place of the second, as the second did of the first, namely, a faith in the plenary inspiration of the soul, as the voice, the temple, the presence, the word of God? Under the names of reverence for reason, the dignity of human nature, the sacredness of humanity, is contained the great truth, ever struggling to express itself—always inspiring faith in Church and Bible, and giving all the support they had to every claim to infallibility of either, that God *is in man*; that man's moral instincts, intellectual mould, spiritual senses are infinitely wiser than he is—being of God, and the nearest and best account of God—and indeed infallible in what they say of God. It is upon man's secret reverence for his own nature, the unconscious sentiment of God in his soul, that the infallibility of the Church really rested, as the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures still rests there. Man's moral and spiritual nature conferred infallibility upon the Church—plenary inspiration on the Scriptures. It is only by confounding reasoning with reason, the critical with the creative powers in the soul, the personal faculties with the unpersonal essence, that we learn to call and think reason, or the soul, *human*, that is, limited, fallible, uninspired. It is God who is infallible, who is the reason we pronounce divine; it is God who is the soul of our souls, that makes the true plenary inspiration a faith in the eternal, changeless moral instincts intellectual perceptions, and spiritual affections of the soul.

While the Church represented humanity better than she represented herself—that is, was the embodiment of the Holiest in us—she rightfully enough claimed infallibility, and had her claim allowed. When the divine in man had attained enough development in society to see that the Church no longer stood for the best and highest, it was transferred in an age of clerks and scholars to the book which contained the history of our religion, and it was well transferred. For the Bible represented man's reason and dignity better than he was yet able to do it in any other way, and his becoming self-distrust made it necessary to choose a sacred proxy to exercise the solemn and necessary office of divine, authoritative guidance.

A small portion of the race consciously, a much larger portion unconsciously, are now waking up to the feeling that the moral and spiritual instincts, the divine reason, the God-made nature of man, is not performing an arrogant, irreverent, or dangerous work in recognizing the truth, that it is man's moral and spiritual nature which gives all its authority to the Scriptures; and that man's moral and spiritual nature is competent to judge the Scriptures from the moment it feels seriously impelled, and thoughtfully competent to do it; and that in so doing it is only doing distinctly, and openly, and consciously what really it has always secretly been doing by its representatives—the Catholic heads of the Church, and the Protestant interpreters of the Bible. To say that the Bible is amenable to the soul, that the Gospel asks the judgment and indorsement of humanity, is to

say what is most honorable, exalting and glorious of both—for the Soul and Humanity owe all their power to make this indorsement to God in them. We cannot blame the Christian world for clinging with a death-grasp to the doctrine of the Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures, just so long as it fails to recognize the divine humanity of the soul. It can give up one form of this necessary faith in an ultimate rule, only as it receives another. To us who, whether we know it or not, owe all our freedom of interpretation, all our emancipation from the letter, all our glorious relief from the perplexities—historical, moral, spiritual—involved in the Bibliolatry of Protestantism at large, to our faith in Man as inspired by the reason of God—himself the Word made flesh—to us belief in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures is an impossibility, as it is no longer a necessity of our moral peace, or our spiritual anchorage, while it has been to all a terrible drawback on intellectual progress. We sometimes wonder what will be the surprise and dissatisfaction of Bible-worshippers to find no Bibles in heaven! The souls they have prostrated before their Bibles will be there, but the Bibles will be left here to burn in the general conflagration, with the other temporary representations of the Word of God, the eternal Reason which is the foundation of our being. But we shall be reading the Bible in heaven, and in intimate communion with Him who is the source of the Bible, and of our souls. Do I say rightly, that the essence of that fundamental of Protestantism, faith in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, has passed over

into the Liberal School in all its authority, and with added glory and credibleness—and blooms forth in the elder Scripture of God—the soul, the inspired Child of the heavenly and eternal Father.

There is another principle of which I have spoken. We have something which, I maintain, is more infallible than the Scriptures—the soul of man. The second fundamental of Protestantism is, the mysterious efficacy of Christ's blood in the salvation of man. Well, why does Orthodoxy believe in the efficacy of Christ's blood to save the souls of men? It is because man distrusts his reason and invents the infallible Church, and then the infallible Scriptures, to supply his necessity of anchorage. He distrusts his own capacity of a goodness worthy of heaven, and invents an artificial meritoriousness to secure him what he cannot live without hoping for. He cannot think the God of the universe can be willing to save such a miserable sinner, and he invents a God of the Church, whom he calls Christ, who will. He does not believe anything men can do will entitle them to heaven, or that human lives can make men acceptable in the sight of God. I believe that they can, and that they can entitle us to immortal life. Immortal life will be as freely given as life itself. God gave us our life to begin with, and he will continue our life, and give us salvation in his own infinite love and mercy.

What is the doctrine of the Bible concerning man? It is an expression of divine love and mercy, and as such, I accept faith in the infinite mercy and love of God. And Christ died to reveal that truth—not to

create it—to the souls of men. We cannot entertain the doctrine of the blood of Christ, as expressed in all the creeds received by our orthodox brethren. They construct a very ingenious law, and make a logical and plausible system, that we are all under the curse of God—that God interposed—that God died—that God was placated by the mercy of God, and that those of us, who believe in Christ, can finally be admitted into the kingdom of heaven. Nothing can be more affecting than the various ways in which humanity, ever rebuked by its secret ideal, ever reproached by God's image in its own heart, has sought to express its own sense of unworthiness. Nothing more touching than the holy care with which it has sought to keep the Supreme God, its only hope of real salvation, from any participation in its sins, or any loss of dignity by a compromising commerce with man in his wickedness. The doctrine of human depravity is a glorious self-humiliation; the doctrine of salvation by faith, and not by works, a magnificent contempt poured by man upon his own doings; the doctrine of Christ's merits, a sublime defence of God's holiness, a tender disowning of all worth in the presence of a love and disinterestedness worthy of God and humanity! All this was necessary, was significant, was true. But the great essential truths, roughly blocked out, or hugely shadowed forth in these symbols and mystic dogmas, are now capable of being expressed, and are expressed in forms which are freed from the extravagances, the indirectness, and the contradictions which did not offend the earlier ages of the Church.

Thoughtful people discover that the knowledge of a just and merciful God does away the necessity of having two persons in the Godhead, one called the Father to represent the Justice, one called the Son, to represent the Mercy. They see that many of the offices of Christ have been made necessary, by the imaginary unwillingness of the Almighty Parent to fulfill works most natural to him, and inalienable from his excellency. They see that the blood of Christ means the mercy of God; that the atonement means only the free love of God, and they therefore go behind the sign of the thing signified. They see that the mercy and love of God are the real help and salvation of men, and that the perception of this truth, in a less technical form, is likely to do more good than in the technical form in which orthodoxy teaches it. They say, if the atonement has done so much, let us hear more of it. Let us abandon all idea of merit, of desert, of works, and cast ourselves wholly on the goodness and mercy of God. And let us see if all his works and ways do not shine with the same abounding goodness and mercy, now superstitiously confined to the gift and the sacrifice of his Son. It is only the opening wide of the atonement, forever existing in the merciful character of God, which makes life a sacrifice, nature an altar, and the Eternal Spirit always striving, struggling, suffering, to spare and redeem the children of men.

I do not object to this doctrine that it is immoral. I find that our orthodox friends are exceedingly animated in their zeal, inspired by their faith in Christ. And I

am not going to make use of any language which would disparage anything they may conscientiously hold. There is a great deal of Unitarian cant as well as orthodox, and a great deal of the Unitarian consists in exposing the errors of orthodoxy ! We desire in our best and most candid moments to acknowledge, in the fullest manner, the virtues and graces of the orthodox Christians of America and the world. Betrayed by sectarian zeal, we may at times do serious injustice to the aims, the spirit, and the character of this body. Liberal *cant* is no better than conservative cant, Unitarian than Trinitarian bigotry, and it is nothing but bigotry which imagines, and cant which asserts, that the great religious bodies of this country, Catholic and Protestant, are not seriously and anxiously engaged in promoting the morality and piety of the people, and engaged in it with large and most gratifying success. If we could work with these large, well-organized, and fruitful bodies, how gladly would we do so ! And this suggests the true reason why we have come out from them—not to go to a place we liked better—not to get away from a companionship we despised ; but simply because we could not conscientiously *stay* ; could not entertain the opinions, profess the creeds, and be responsible for the direct or indirect implications of the predominant theology of our age and land ! By no will of our own, but providentially, and, as we believe, in the use and enjoyment of a later and clearer light, we have arrived at certain opinions in regard to the Gospel of Christ, which are offensive and heretical in the eyes of orthodoxy, and

which make orthodoxy imperfect and unsatisfactory in our eyes. We have not become Liberal Christians of choice, but of necessity. We have not made ourselves; the times have made us. The science, literature, politics, humane instincts, providential developments of the age, acting upon persons by organization, antecedents, position, temperament, experience, specially fitted to receive their influence, have produced in us certain convictions, impressions, and tastes, which orthodoxy no longer satisfies, and which demand what we call Liberal Christianity. We are what we are by the grace of God. "Not of men, neither by man," have we learned our creed—but of God speaking in the commanding tones of inward convictions wrought by the irresistible influence of his ever-working Spirit and Providence. Orthodoxy could not tolerate these convictions; Liberalism could not suppress them; and nothing remained, but to erect a new platform—not in opposition, but in extension of the old one. This platform, though as yet thinly occupied, is large enough for all Christians, and is built to accommodate all. We are not here upon it, in comparative solitude, because we wish isolation; or are willing to exclude any Christians from it; but simply because as yet the great body of those we acknowledge to be Christians cannot acknowledge us to be so; the multitude we desire to work with are not willing to work with us. They ask us to stifle our consciences, or our convictions—which are a part of our consciences—and come and join them; to give up our opinions and take theirs, and then enjoy their fellowship. We ask

them to keep their consciences, their opinions, their singularities, and come and join us in a common faith in Christ, with the freest right to every man to explain his faith as he will—a faith in Christ, the only test of which shall be a life that does not deny the idea of his accepted mastership in the soul. But for this, they are no more ready than we are ready to accept their conditions of union. Very well, we are sorry for them; but not so sorry as they must be for us. For despite their denial of us, we are not compelled to deny them, nor to abandon them, nor even to give up their fellowship in the spirit, though we are excluded from it in the form.

Happily, what the Church is, and what the relation of Christians with each other, is not settled by councils, or creeds, or associations; but by inevitable and self-executing spiritual laws. Protestantism may disown Catholicism, but she cannot get out of her branches the sap which that great ecclesiastical trunk brought up from the original root of the Church; and Liberalism may disown Evangelicism, but she cannot break the connection which history has established between them, nor get rid of the blessed inheritance of faith and experience delivered to her by the Church of the last three centuries. Rome may excommunicate Geneva, and Geneva may excommunicate Boston; but we might as well hope to get the blood of our ancestors out of our veins, as the history of our common Christianity out of the heart of the ever-living Church. The Church is one; twigs, branches, stock, and root have one life, and cannot wisely in theory deny a union which, in fact, is

independent of all theories, being based on the very nature of man and society.

We maintain, then, that we are *in* the Church, and *are* the Church—not a part of it, but the whole Church—having *in* us the heart and soul of orthodoxy itself, the essence of all that gave life to its creed, the utmost significance and vital force of what it taught and still teaches, in what we conceive to be a stuttering and stammering way, in a cumbrous and outworn language, with a circuitous and wearisome phraseology; but meaning really what we mean, and doing for men essentially what we are doing. All that we claim is a better statement of the old and changeless truth, a disembarrassed account of the ever true and identical story. And we insist upon the importance and necessity of this work, to adapt Christianity to our own age, and meet the wants of what are becoming millions of human beings.

I do not think because there is so much evil in the world—because there is so much ignorance, sorrow and sin, that we ought to be discouraged. There is progress. The thing is going on, and we ought to trust enough in God to believe that he looks down upon the progress of the world and is not discouraged either. We ought to trust more in God's compassion and love, for they are a thousand times more inspiring than all our servile fear. God is love; and when we believe in his infinite mercy we shall have more courage to go on in the work of reforming men, than when supposing we are pulling them out of hell, which God has kindled under their feet.

To those who believe such things, all we can say is,

that God in his providence has not compelled us to believe them. But we must not fall into pride, though I do not think we are liable to on account of the minority in which we are placed, and on account of the necessity of our providential position. But we are not going to deny the root from which we have sprung. We have not separated ourselves from the brethren; we hold them in our inclosure; we are always ready to receive them, to welcome them. We are not expecting they will receive us, on account of their providential position. We have an intellectual perception of what the times demand and what the future is to be. We can see clearer than they. We can see why they are wrong; they cannot see why we are right—but they will presently.

Now, brethren, all I have to say is, let us take good cheer to ourselves and go on. We have a noble work to do in the world. We believe in the immediate presence of God in the soul of man. We believe in the safety of truth and in the significance of human life, and we think that all creeds are only mere stuttering, stammering attempts to tell a truth which is too big to be expressed in words, and which is too glorious to be put into the articles of our faith—which are better for what they don't say than for what they do.

The actual presence of God in the world, in all his love and mercy, supplying our deficiencies, helping our infirmities, consecrating and transforming matter, giving sanctity and beauty to life—this is what the *renewing* of the old faith offers to Humanity.

The indistinct perception of this faith and the divine craving to see it clearly, and bring it to the sight of others, has led to the existence and organization of the Liberal Churches, and indirectly to the formation of the Young Men's Christian Union. Faith in man, as the child of God, his word and residence, authorizing the freest use of thought, the profoundest respect for individual convictions, the firmest confidence in progress and in the triumph of truth; inspiring good-will, humane affections, philanthropic activity, and personal holiness; faith in God as the Father of man—man's universal Saviour and inspirer—man's merit consists wholly in being his child and the pupil of his grace in nature, life, the church, and the unseen world—these are the permanent articles of Christian faith, which is not so much faith in Christ—as Christ's faith. Go on, young men, and prosper in your good work. God make you worthy of your principles, and make your principles as universal in their operation as they are eternal in their authority, divine in their source, and humane and exalting in their influence.

THE RELIGION OF FEAR AND THE RELIGION OF LOVE.

BY REV. HENRY BLANCHARD,

Of Brooklyn.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: In these days of theological changes, an attempt has been made to prove that exhortations to men to cease from evil doing, because of eternal punishment, are appeals to the sentiment of love instead of the sentiment of fear. They who make this statement say, that it is incredible that the love of God, as shown by his death on the cross, should be resultless, as it would be if the passage to holiness can be made through the discipline of hell, instead of beneath the arms of the cross.

To me the reasoning does not seem sound. All appeals to men to avoid sin, because of eternal, or any punishment, are appeals to fear. Men may be told with explicitness and earnestness, that sin is inevitably followed by punishment, but while this is said, they may be exhorted to become holy, because they ought to love God and goodness, and not because they fear the tortures of a mental, or the flames of a material hell. I think, therefore, that any system of religion which makes prominent the doctrine of eternal punishment,

may be called a religion of fear; and that which makes its chief point the doctrine of doing and being good, because of the love of goodness, may be denominated the religion of love.

Suffer me, then, to show, so far as I may be able, some of the effects of the Religion of Fear and the Religion of Love.

Fear has made thousands of men observers of the forms of religious worship.

When I read of coarse and brutal soldiery ready to sack and slay, kneeling down before they commence their bloody work, I cannot doubt that they did so because of their fear of that place whose terrors their priests had pictured. I cannot doubt that thousands who have worshipped in St. Peter's, at Rome, and St. Paul's, in London, were influenced by fear.

It is not my wish to speak uncourteously; but knowing that I respect all men's opinions, I do not hesitate to speak what I believe to be true in illustration of my subject.

Consider, then, the churches of our own land; think how many men there are in Roman Catholic and in Protestant churches, who engage in church services because of fear.

It is undoubtedly true, that desires to be considered respectable, urge many to occupy their pews.

There are men with plethoric bodies and purses, who fear nothing in this world but the loss of their money or dinners, and do not fear the hereafter, simply because they do not believe in one, or, because they think that

the time when the minister will pronounce his eulogy over their bodies is very distant, and who are attendants in church, because they think that acquaintance with a minister and the ownership of a pew give them respectability. Still very large numbers attend because they fear the future, and think that the very best way to get to heaven is to take one of the best seats in a Gothic church. For in company with so many good men; with so learned a minister as the engineer, there is but very little danger of running off the celestial track.

Now, such attendants at church can hardly be called disciples of Christ. *He* does not ask men to lean on his breast because they fear the flaming pit near which they tread. He can hardly love those who turn towards him only when they begin to fear. As we wish children to lean on our bosoms, not because they fear the rod, but because they love to be there, and because they love us, so Christ is the brother and the master to those who love him.

While therefore the churches may be full, they are not full of Christians. For he who leans on his cushioned pew back, with the feeling of "how respectable is the church!" and he who counts his beads, or bends his head because he thinks that thus he pleases that God who is always pointing with one hand to the cross, and with the other to the flames of the damned; are not such Christians as Jesus would have them to be?

Again, fear is inoperative in preventing evil in very many cases.

The influence of fear can only be temporary. Men

are not always afraid of anything. The poltroon of the first battle becomes the daring soldier of the third. The cowardly assassin, who skulked at first in dread of the police and the gibet, soon chats with the former, and pats the latter.

The man who lives near a Mount Vesuvius, may fear that the lava some day may bury himself and house, and yet he plays with his children in summer evenings, and sleeps soundly in his bed in winter nights.

Men who, looking into the next world, see the shining walls of heaven, and the light that falls upon them from the furnaces of hell, into which they look, even though they may be conscious of their possible thermal journey, are not always afraid.

Thus, a thief believing in eternal punishment, is not deterred thereby, when he is about to break the pane of glass, or pick the lock.

If a minister were to meet him within the house, and to tell him of a hell, the thief would not be much moved. Ministers, however, are generally abed when the thieves are abroad. If an angel were to meet the thief, and to speak of unending punishment, there might be some effect wrought; but angels do not leave heaven to turn men out of houses.

Moreover, some of the most heinous crimes are committed when a man cannot be considered sane. Thus, a murderer, whether he commits the deed under sudden impulse in an unexpected opportunity, or has been stealthy and cool as a tiger in his approach to his victim, is insane; insane in the one instance, because accu-

mulated hate made him a brute animal, without thought of God or a hereafter—insane, in the other, because poverty, wrong, or any other cause, crushed down the spirit and developed the animal. Then the deed is done, the victim lying before him ghastly and gory, then first comes horror at the deed, and the thought of punishment.

Again, where fear is operative, it has only restraining force.

Fear may make a man afraid to steal a purse near a dead man's coffin, but it will seldom prompt him to put a purse into a widow's hand. Thus it makes men strive to see how little evil they can do, but not how much good.

Do we not see illustration of this fact in the actions of men about us; in him who gives his hundred dollars to a missionary in the parlor, and then goes to the window to drive away the pale girl begging at the back door; in him who lounges on his couch while the seamstress stitches, whose earnings help to buy his house and dinners? For such suppose that their money to missionaries, and their attendance at church, when they have done no positive wrong, are the price of admission to heaven, and they are by no means desirous of paying a larger admission fee than is necessary. Such men forget that while Christ receives his brother in the church, he kisses him by the weary woman's side, or the sick man's bed.

Let us consider the effects of the religion of love. Love that makes the mother's chamber richer than

palaces or cathedrals are, and the wifely smile a shining ripple of the stream of love that flows from God through all the world: that makes the baby's cradle the ark over which angels stoop, and the grandsire's head the mount about which light from the future heaven plays; that sees the loveliness of soul in the friend's ungainly form, and some goodness shining beneath the rags of poverty and the livery of vice; that urges us to the doing of noble deeds, and that sees God in all things round. Now, the religion of love, while it has made many disciples, has made but few attendants on church worship. I might dwell at length on this, but I only name it and pass it by. But it is worthy our consideration, that many men who are moved to duty by love, instead of fear, do not honor the church. They find their altars in rocks that hang over the sea, and in mountains that rise towards heaven; they lean on banks of rivers, hearing music from the waters, and seeing God in the grass and flowers, and do not seek the altars raised in temples of man's building.

Again, love has more occasion for manifestation than fear. There are more flowers than volcanoes, and so he whose soul is moved by love as he looks on the former, has more occasion for the manifestations of love than has he for those of fear who trembles at volcanoes. Fear requires extraordinary events for its action, while love is elicited by common occurrences, and, therefore, there is greater permanence in its influence.

It is swift to warm the soul when the smile on the infant is seen, and the words of the mother are heard;

when kind deeds are done in one's behalf, and when nature is seen in her glory. A religion, then, which appeals to love, and incites to doing by this love, is more permanent in its influence than that which appeals to fear.

Again, the religion of love saves us from doubting God's government.

We have need of a faith to save us from doubt. As we read of the battle-fields where the brave and good have been trodden down by the evil; as we know of a Kossuth driven from Hungary, while a Napoleon leaps to a throne: as we look into the cellars of great cities where woman is leprous and man wallows, where children flaunt in their rags and appall with imprecations, we need some faith that shall make us hope.

Now, if I believed in a religion of fear, I should have but little hope. What has it done to make the slave-catcher repent, or the harlot reform? What has it done to check the hand of him who is poisoning his brother with deadly drink, or to arrest the axe of the royal murderer, or the dagger of the midnight assassin? If my hope for the world's reformation, then, depended on the success of a religion of fear, I should despond. At times it seems as though there were some men who need the smell of fire to drive them from evil. But I never long remain in that opinion.

However, hard, coarse, invulnerable men may seem to be, still, in my calmest, most thoughtful, highest moods, I believe that, after all, it is only love that is to sweep clean the cellars of Five Points, and the "hells"

of London—that is to turn all men from evil. It is only when we believe, as the religion of love teaches us, that punishment is for improvement, that we can hope.

Eternal punishment, the doctrine of the religion of fear, if it does not improve, can only seem awful to our minds; and if it does improve, *then it is at least the portion of those who are good*. If we believe that the good, however made so by the discipline of earth or the punishment of hell will suffer, how can we hope that a God who does not end suffering in the next world will cause it to cease in this?

But, in order that we may work with strong hearts and arms here, it is necessary to believe that pain which comes from evil will cease here, and therefore that evil also will come to an end.

Oh yes, as we young men grow into thoughtful moods, and think of the great problems of life, we need the faith that will save us from doubting the providence of God.

To this Union, Mr. President, in whose behalf it gives me pleasure to speak to-night, this religion of love comes to give courage and power.

Believing it, we can look trustingly to God, and calmly on the evil of the world.

Strengthened by it, we can work as young men, whether within the pulpit or without it, for God's glory and man's redemption.

Let us look to him, the all-powerful, and loving, and merciful; let us look to Christ, the sweet, the serene, the majestic. Following him as the leader, and work-

ing in his spirit, we shall be led to victory over doubt and fear.

NOTE.—As this address was not prepared with any expectation of publication, and as the last part was chiefly extemporaneous, I have taken some license in writing out this part. The ideas, however, are the same, though the form and fullness of expression has been somewhat changed.

THE PROPER TREATMENT OF THE INFIDEL TENDENCIES OF OUR DAY.

BY REV. O. B. FROTHINGHAM,

Of Jersey City.

THE subject which has been assigned me is a rather delicate one; at least it seemed so before I heard Brother Bellows speak. There is another thing, however, which makes me think it is not quite so delicate a subject, and that is, if you will allow me to mention it, Mr. President, that you, in the judgment of very many, are an infidel. The members of this Christian association occupy what is regarded an infidel position. And that very admirable constitution which I have read to-day, if presented at a council of churches, commonly reputed orthodox, would be considered, doubtless, the platform of an infidel association. Those who have had so much cause to ask for charity as we have, can afford to be charitable. But those three cardinal virtues of Christianity—Faith, Hope, Charity—are not so easily obtained. Faith, which is not the muscular grip of the understanding upon wooden cars of formula, but the yearning spirit which gives the substance of what is hoped for, the evidence of what is not seen; Hope, which is always straining its eyes towards a brighter future;

and Charity, which, while it roots itself in God, and holds fast its own convictions, can open wide its arms of love to every earnest thinking man—these things are not so easily obtained. Most people seem to think themselves in a posture of faith, when, their backs braced up against a dead wall of theory, they vigorously keep doubts and objections at arm's-length. But true faith is the reaction of the soul upon God, and only he who thus conceives of *faith* can have any idea of the nature of *infidelity*, or the love which can do it justice.

The word infidelity is still potent in the conjuration of evil spirits. It is a word suggestive of wicked associations, and charged with the gall of bitterness. Every man resents the application of the term to himself. Even those who are themselves rank infidels in the view of seven-eighths of Christendom, and who might have learned by this time, one would think, to take the epithet, when bestowed on them, as a mere formula of theological classification, nevertheless feel insulted when it *is* bestowed; for the name suggests something more than difference of opinion on theological points—it suggests a *culpable* difference of opinion—it implies a want of reverence, truth, lovingness, humility, and other qualities belonging to the good heart. It is a title of opprobrium, and is meant to be. It has been purposely scented with sulphur; and yet infidelity, as popularly defined, is no sin in the sight of God. It is not marked in the decalogue, nor noticed in the Sermon on the Mount; it is no guilt of which a man's natural con-

science convicts him. If it is a crime, it is a crime purely factitious and conventional. Enlightened reason knows nothing of it; the simple heart knows nothing of it; the awakened soul knows nothing of it; the infinite Spirit of truth knows nothing of it. It is a ghost which the prevalent theology has scared up from the region of ancient night. Had there been no sectarian exclusiveness, no assumption of infallibility by churches or parties, no dogmatism on matters of speculation, what is called infidelity would never have been heard of; the thing would never have been imagined. Infidelity is simply the reaction of the human mind against the narrow intellectual restrictions of the creeds. When these are sharply defined, jealously guarded, severely enforced by weight of authority, infidelity smoulders in the breasts of the thoughtful many, and breaks out with volcanic force in the passionate denials of the heroic few, who, like Voltaire and Thomas Paine, have the courage to make themselves heard. If the creeds become confused and lax, if the authority that sustains them become divided against itself, as is the case at present, infidelity comes forth into the light; it increases, it is outspoken, it assumes coherent and systematic shape, and at the same time loses its impatient, aggressive, and negative character; and so modern infidelity differs from that of any preceding time chiefly in this: that it is so powerful, and so widely diffused, that it can afford to be more comprehensive, positive, wise, and calm. But leaving generalities, let me come more close to the matter in hand.

Infidelity, technically defined, is disbelief in the Scriptures, as they are interpreted by the accepted religious authorities. If the Church is the admitted interpreter, he is an infidel who holds anything inconsistent with its reading of the sacred text. If a dogma interprets them, as it does in all Protestant lands, he is an infidel who rejects the sense which the dogma pronounces to be there. If they must be received literally, or not rightly at all, he is the infidel who, disregarding the letter, penetrates to the spirit, a conscientious student of the Book of Nature, written upon the firmament in letters of everlasting light, and engraved by the finger of God upon the stony tablets which lie, layer upon layer, in the eternal archives of the pre-Adamite earth, meets there with statements of fact and principles of law that are inconsistent with the Bible's statements on the same subjects, and because he will not disavow the results of his original reading of that original word, every line of which is authentic, and no page of which has been blurred by translation, he must bear the name of infidel. The learned scholar applies to the Bible the same rules of literary criticism that he applies to other books, and perceiving many features in its composition which he cannot reconcile with received theories of its inspiration, he must throw away his library, fall on his knees before the idol, and cry "*peccavi*," or be ranked an infidel. The man of quick and illuminated conscience meeting in the "holy volume" sentiments he cannot approve of, and immoralities he must condemn, is straightway branded as infidel, unless he will disown the revela-

tions made by the Holy Spirit to his own heart, and will say that his holiest feelings are a noxious fume from the abyss below. The profoundly religious man, whose experiences have outgrown the unspiritual stage in which the Hebrews lingered—fascinated by the barbaric splendors of an Oriental Deity—whose soul revolts from what seem to him false views of the Infinite, can escape the charge and the penalty of infidelity only by putting on sackcloth, sitting in ashes, and bewailing his hard and impenitent heart. We have only to repeat over thoughtfully a few of the great infidel names, to be satisfied that the epithet has been bestowed on men who have labored in the cause of intellectual freedom, who have placed confidence in the honest exercise of the human reason, who have enlarged the boundaries of scientific and other inquiry, and opened new fields to the occupancy of the soul. The name of Galileo springs at once into every recollection. Let me add those of Huss and Jerome; of Wickliffe, Luther, and his compeers; of Shelley, who believed so much in God, that he was fain to call himself an atheist. The Puritans, the Quakers, the Unitarians, from Socinius to Priestley, from Priestley to Channing, from Channing to Parker and Martineau; the Reformers—anti-slavery men like Garrison and Phillips, who say, “If the Bible countenances slavery, so much the worse for the Bible;” advocates of the claims of women, who venture to criticise the apostle Paul for his ungallant depreciation of the fair sex; the enemies of the gallows, whose humanity presuming upon some natural growth in the conscience of

mankind in the course of several thousand years, takes the liberty of doubting whether the barbarous enactments of the age of Noah are a legitimate basis for the legislation of a Christian commonwealth—all these, and multitudes besides, are written in the black list of infidelity. Infidels, in all generations of the Church, have been the *progressives* in every direction; the believers in the present and the future; the people who had confidence in the improbability of man, and the perennial inspirations of God; the men and women who were persuaded that all the spheres of wisdom and excellence were opened to human powers, and that man was welcomed to all the treasure they contained.

Is it now the question, how are we to treat such as these? The question can receive but one answer from this platform. To look askance at them, to keep aloof from them, to call them hard names, to menace them with exclusion from the privileges of earthly fellowship as a foretaste of their everlasting separation from God's favor, to express towards them any unkind or suspicious feeling, is to do a coarse and foolish injustice not less to ourselves than to them. Let us not either speak of exercising charity or forbearance towards them; for that would convey an assumption of superior wisdom or grace on our part. If I have described these people fairly, if they are indeed thoughtful, earnest, hopeful people, bent on finding the truth and doing their duty, we surely can do no better than seek to catch some portion of their noble zeal, and draw off into our own minds some of the positive convictions which are the animating spirit of

theirs. It will do us no harm to sit at their feet occasionally ; to listen with respect to what they may have to say ; and consider whether, after all, they may not be the deeper, broader believers. Grant that they overlook or deny some truths which we hold exceedingly dear, which we believe to be essential to the welfare and progress of mankind, we will not magnify their unbelief, and undervalue their belief ; we will not call their attention sharply to their denials, as if what they rejected could be of as much consequence as what they held ; we will frankly say to them, "Go on in God's name ; study honestly, think hard ; you have beliefs—accept them as your guide, and follow them generously. If the things we deem essential *are* essential, you will find them in time ; if not, no matter." We will not drive them into a negative position, terrifying them with ghost-stories, till, as they run on their appointed way, their heads ever and anon turn over their shoulders to glare at some imaginary demons of haunting doubt. We will not compel them to walk backwards towards the light. If it is an unspeakable wrong we do ourselves, when, brooding over unbeliefs, we think of ourselves as infidels ; if we know that, by dwelling on our denials, we allow dimness to steal over our moral vision, lethargy to seize on our moral purpose, indecision and imbecility to take possession of our hearts, and leave us full of great resources, at the mercy of a whim—it is an equal wrong done to others when we remind them of their skepticism, and we do not fully avoid this wrong until we recognize all men as *positive believers* in some-

thing, and candidly say to them, "Never mind now what you *disbelieve*; decide what it is you *believe*; take that, be true to it, and it will be enough."

Meanwhile, we must do what we can to win the consent of honest minds to our persuasions. If our platform is too small to accommodate them all, we will extend it; we will remove every superfluous article of furniture; we will expand our definitions, simplify our statements, revise our formularies, sink our foundations deeper, until we come to a bottom broad enough for the erection of a temple that will contain the whole truth-loving, worshipping Christendom. Instead of complaining that the old homestead of faith is too narrow to hold the increasing family of the seekers, we will rather rejoice that it has at length become so narrow that additions must be made to it in order to meet the demands of ampler hospitality. Instead of shuddering at each new denial, we will rather congratulate ourselves that *possible* denials are less by one; that the truth, the final, necessary truth is by so much the nearer; that the time is approaching when the unity of the Spirit shall annihilate infidelity, and remove the temptation to deny.

But I am reminded that all modern infidelity is not of this noble stamp; that the tendencies of unbelief are downward, as well as upward, running out into materialism, sensualism, antinomianism, diabolism, the pantheism of the naturalist, the atheism of the fatalist, the deification of the appetites. So indeed it seems. But as Mr. Macaulay says, in his famous article on Milton: "There is only one cure for the evils which newly

acquired freedom produces, and that cure is *freedom*." It is in precisely such cases as these that the conciliating policy is needful, and the exclusive policy suicidal. These rough, ungovernable spirits, irreverent, passionate, are the worst subjects in the world for pious admonition and grave rebuke. They must be brought to see, as they never have seen, the positive beauty of spiritual truths ; they must be made to feel the persuasive influence of the great beliefs which good men cherish ; they must be invited, unobtrusively, to lay aside their old prejudices against religious ideas as the invention of superstition, and religious institutions as the tools of tyranny, and to perceive in them elevating, refining, invigorating powers, man's natural sustenance for mind and soul. But how shall they be induced to view them in this light ? Certainly not by denunciations ; certainly not by contempt ; certainly not by an unsympathetic attitude of superiority or indifference. Where infidelity, as in these instances, has a moral cause, it must have a moral cure. Let even the scoffer see that we really believe in our own doctrines, that we endeavor to live under the influence of the lofty ideas we profess to hold so precious, that some of the beauty we adore in the heavens has passed into our own spirits, and soon he will lose the disposition to scoff. The logic of a consistent life is irresistible. It will bring men back even to their superstitions, as was demonstrated by Fénelon, when, alone, refusing the protection of soldiers, he went unarmed among the infuriated Huguenots of Pictou to win them back to the Church which had just butchered

their brethren in cold blood. Multitudes of people in our communities associate religion, the Church, the Bible, the creeds, the clergy, with pride, hypocrisy, the arbitrary assumption of dignity and power. In warring upon religion they devoutly believe themselves to be warring upon priestcraft, superstition, and the institutions by which man is degraded. Let us convince them of their mistake; let us teach them by word and example that reverence and liberty go hand in hand together, that true freedom consists in obedience to the Spirit, that the great hope and persuasions of the soul exert their legitimate influence when they make us kindly, generous, humane; that we at least owe to them our deliverance from the very bigotries they abhor.

After all, it is only *fidelity* that will counteract *infidelity*. Can any one affect wonder at the prevalence of very gross unbelief in religious verities? Consider how little the Church has done to give mankind wholesome instruction in the laws of the earthly and heavenly life; how little it has done to develop freely and gracefully the capacities of rational beings; consider the discouraging views presented of human nature in its original and constitution, its tendencies and destiny. Consider the savage treatment which the senses have received at the hands of churchmen and theologians. Call to mind the wholesale proscription of the natural desires of recreation. Nay, remember that religion, claiming to speak in the name of Jesus, has pronounced whole classes of human pursuits to be unsanctified. Mankind will not submit for

ever to such restraints. It cannot. It should not. And when, after centuries of ecclesiastical strait-jacketing, it succeeds in emancipating itself, are we surprised at the violence and riot of its breaking forth? For my part, I must confess, that even the more passionate tendencies of modern infidelity so called, melancholy as they are to contemplate, menacing apparently a return to barbarism, seem to me natural, nor wholly discreditable to human nature. Blind they may be, and coarse and depraving, but what else can be expected from men whom religion has not undertaken to develop or refine? But they are set in motion by a dumb instinct that cannot abide forced and unwarranted repression, and they are guided by a dogged trust in human nature, which accepts the inspiration of the senses, because it does not yet understand what the inspiration of the soul may be. They betray a vast impatience with the asceticism that for so many generations has denied men access to the genial influences of life.

Very imperfect vindication of very rudimental rights, you will say. Very true; so it is; but let us call it *vindication*, not apostasy; not a declension from better beliefs, for such better beliefs the people never *really* cherished; let us call it, not *infidelity*, but *fidelity*—mute, brutish, and undiscerning to such laws as are discovered in the constitution of their nature; let us do our best to diffuse a knowledge of higher laws; let us pray with all our might that these first inarticulate signs of return to a natural allegiance may lead, by a normal unfolding, through the several stages of intellectual,

moral, and spiritual growth towards a more complete supremacy of right, reason, and conscience.

From these imperfect hints it will be inferred that, in what men call infidelity, I discover the rude commencement of a nobler spiritual faith. At present we see only its dim promise, clouded by much that is rude and elementary, by much that is deplorable. Infidelity has as yet reached few results in any direction. But as indicating a general reaction in all directions against unjustifiable restraints upon human nature, it is something to be watched, guided, instructed, but nothing to be feared. No; the only infidelity to be feared, the only real infidelity in fact, the only infidelity which is a sin in the sight of God, is a disbelief in the primary faculties of the human soul; disbelief in the capability of man's reason to discriminate between truth and error in all departments of knowledge, sacred or profane; disbelief in the heart's instinctive power to distinguish good from evil; disallowance of the claims of conscience to pass a verdict upon matters of right and wrong, whenever and wherever brought up. They are the infidels who are untrue to the light they have; who deny the plenary inspiration of that elder Scripture written by the finger of God upon the human heart; who overlay their reason with heaps of antiquated traditions; who bid their conscience stand dumb before appalling iniquities in obedience to the ill-read letter of an ancient record; who, in the interest of power, wealth, worldliness, not seldom of unrighteousness and inhumanity, plead for a Tract Society, a Bible, or a

Church; who compass sea and land to make a proselyte, and, when he is made, are quite indifferent as to his being a practical Christian; who collect vast sums of money annually for the ostensible purpose of saving men's souls, practically to the effect of keeping their souls in subjection and blindness. As I read the New Testament, I find that Jesus charged infidelity upon none but such as these: the people who made religion a cloak for pride, selfishness, and cruelty; the conspicuously saintly people who could spare an hour to pray at a street-corner, but had not a minute for a dying fellow-man lying in his blood in a lonely pass. In the judgment of these, Jesus himself was the prince of unbelievers. Punctilious adherence to the letter, practical disbelief in the Spirit—this is infidelity. Everywhere, in the Church and out of it, under whatever guise, with whatever demeanor, whether stalking along publicly with brazen face of defiance set against all that men deem holy, or creeping noiseless about, cowed and demure within the cloisters of consecrated observance—it is always the same thing, always rank, hateful, malignant. This it is that corrupts the fountains of moral life in society. Is it a question how we must deal with this? Can there be a better way than that pursued by the Master himself? We must endeavor to lay the evil bare in its true character, to tear off its mask, that people may see what it is, to weaken its prestige of wisdom, authority, sanctity; we must pour upon it the flood of an honest indignation, and pronounce upon it the verdict of a true Christian conscience. But this duty is

but preliminary to another, in which it is included—that of diffusing a knowledge of the truth, and of giving to the regenerating principles of a true Christianity an organized and extended power that shall command for them a willing and profound obedience.

TRUE AND FALSE IDEAS OF EVANGELICAL RELIGION.

BY REV. DR. SAWYER.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: In all reforms, in whatever tends to meliorate the social or civil condition of mankind, we must always observe the potent influence of *Religion*. For say what we will of man, even though we consider him fallen and totally depraved, still the fact is apparent and undeniable that he is by nature a religious being. A nation of atheists never existed and never will. Some form of religion man has always had, and always must have.

And as religion lies nearest of all forces to the human heart, and touches the very springs of our action, so it must ever exert the deepest and most permanent influence in forming the character of both individuals and nations. And although, in such complicated problems, there must always be many disturbing causes, and many exceptions, which no philosophy can fully explain, still it is on general principles true, that if you can tell us what a people's religion is, we can also tell you what its condition and character must be. Consequences follow their causes, and take their coloring from them. Men do not gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles. A

false religion never yet raised a people to a true civilization.

In the ancient states, long ago perished, of Assyria, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, we see, I think, the highest civilization which the human race has ever attained under an unrevealed religion. And the scholar need not be told what it was, nor, with all its glories in literature and art, with all its commerce and physical power, how poor it was.

Eighteen centuries ago a new era dawned upon the world. Out from the manger of Bethlehem and the village of Nazareth, from the Garden of Gethsemane and the cross of Calvary, went forth a new light that is now streaming over the earth. It came when men seemed to have done their utmost, and the human mind had wrought its greatest achievements and gained its noblest victories. It came as a new moral force in the world, and breathed a new life over the nations. It came with new ideas, and entering the heart, it kindled there new hopes and diviner aspirations.

Christianity presents itself to us in a three-fold form. It is a *truth*: it imparts a *spirit*: it goes out into a *life*. In other words, it demands faith, it inspires love, and blossoms in good works. And observe, these three things are not isolated from one another, but belong together, stand in a certain order, and hold certain relations to each other. Without a Christian faith, how is one to acquire a Christian spirit, or perform the duties of a Christian life?

When the Jews asked Jesus what they should do

that they might work the works of God, he replied : "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Sent of God, was the first, the indispensable work for them to perform. This was to change their hearts, to modify all their conscious relations towards God and their fellow-men, and to be the means of their salvation. Without this faith they remained as they were, saw things in their old light, and lived over their old lives. With it they became new creatures, and rose into a higher plane of life.

The Christian religion went out into the world challenging the assent of men, and demanding reception into the human heart. You all know the war it occasioned, a war of ideas. Divine truths, which are always young and vigorous, grappled with hoary errors, and were victors in the contest. Before this new religion, went down pagan temple, and altar, and shrine. Old institutions and customs passed away, and on their ruins gradually arose, and is still rising, a new Christian civilization, with its "divine humanities," its deeper love and its higher hopes.

It was *faith in Christ* that wrought these changes over the face of the earth. Men *believed* and therefore spoke and acted as they did. They saw the truth and received it, and placed themselves in harmony with it, and then went forth under its guidance to lead others into its light and up towards heaven.

But what, it may be asked, did men believe? I answer, they believed, first of all, that Jesus of Naza-

reth was the *Messiah*, the Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. They believed him to be the image of God and an infallible and authoritative Teacher. They believed him to be the great Prophet so long foretold, and the great King whose reign was to become so wide and so beneficent. They recognized him as Emanuel, God with us, for in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He spoke God's word, and did God's work. He declared the FATHER, and unfolded to us the spiritual laws of the universe. He revealed to our race its true relations, its duties and its destiny.

Now he who thus believed in Christ had nothing to do but to sit down, like Mary of old, at the feet of the Divine Master and learn of him, learn his doctrine, catch his spirit, and do his will. And St. John tells us that "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." By this faith he becomes a *Christian*, enters the family of saints, and becomes a citizen of the kingdom of heaven.

I need not say that this is the true ground of "Christian union." Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; whoever receives him as a divine teacher and saviour, is a Christian, and belongs to the Church universal. All other grounds of union seem to me false or impracticable. I do not deny that *love* is necessary to such union; it is the bond of perfectness everywhere. But love itself, Christian love, grows out of Christian *faith*, as the grape grows upon the vine, and cannot exist without it.

The difficulty lies here, not in making faith the basis of union, but in demanding a unity of faith in too many things, and in things which at best are only matters of doubtful disputation, and were never required by Christ and his apostles. "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," was the confession of the eunuch, and upon this alone was he baptized and received into the Church. He was born of God, according to St. John, and was a Christian. It is now as it was then, and I would take my stand where Philip and the apostles stood. To me every man is a Christian who believes that Jesus is the Christ, and as such, he is entitled to my sympathies and my love. He may be but a beginner in the gospel, and, like the poor blind man, may see men as trees walking; he may be ignorant in many things, and err in many things, as we all no doubt do, but still he is a Christian and my brother. He owns the same Master, and, if he is sincere, follows the same guide. I care not to what sect he may chance to belong, or what name he may bear. He is, with myself, a disciple of Christ, and an heir of God.

This union, however, does not imply an impossible sameness of thought and opinion among men. All Christendom agrees in the fundamental truth that Jesus is the Christ, and that his words are spirit and life, while it is difficult to bring any considerable part of it to adopt any one of the many symbols of faith, or confessions, which individuals or sects have framed for their fellow-men. I doubt, indeed, whether God intended that all men should agree in all the minutiae of opinion and

faith. He loves variety. Go out into the forest and you cannot find two leaves precisely alike. It is so with the human race. In a general unity there is an endless diversity, and out of this grow many of the charms and harmonies of life. The world would be insipid, if not intolerable, did we all look, think, speak, and act just alike, so that every man we meet should be only a second self, *alter et idem*.

But because we do not all look or believe precisely alike, is it worth our while to worry and devour each other? Is it not better to allow what we cannot readily change, to take things as we find them, and employ them as best we may for our mutual growth and improvement? I like the philosophy of an eminent literary woman of our own country, who, after much conflict and difficulty, condescendingly resolved to "accept the universe." It was a great act of a noble mind. True, the universe was not altogether such as she would have it; but then it was here, and she could not easily remove it, and she finally did the best thing she could, under the circumstances, with it, she *accepted* it. I am disposed to follow her example on this subject of diversity of opinion in the matter of religion. I will tolerate what I cannot prevent, and will believe that there is still something good in what many deplore as so great an evil.

The Romish Church endeavors to cast all minds in one mould, and bring all men to think and believe precisely alike. This is the great problem at which it has been industriously laboring for centuries. And what is the success which has attended its efforts? Why, so

far as it has succeeded at all, it has only suppressed free thought, practically ignored reason, denied Christian charity, and made faith a formal thing, utterly destitute of vitality and power. It deserves to be considered how far that is Christian faith which is merely an unreasoning, and often an unreasonable assent to dogmas that we must not examine, and which it is little less than endless perdition to doubt. The Romish Church boasts of its unity of faith. Its doctrines, we are told, are always and everywhere received by all. But will it tell us what this vaunted unity, such as it is, has really cost? how many wars and persecutions, what racks and tortures, what tears and anguish? To secure this unity that Church has covered itself with innocent blood, and converted the religion of Jesus Christ into an engine of tyranny and outrage. And, after all, what is it worth? It is the product of fear, not of love; the result of ignorance, not of knowledge; the child of darkness, rather than of light. It is a palsy of the public intellect and the public conscience wherever it exists.

Protestants maintain the right and duty of private judgment. In practice, however, with many of them, this boasted right dwindles down to this, the right to think and believe precisely as they themselves do. True, necessity has forced them to exercise a narrow and grudging spirit of tolerance. Heresies, it may be observed, grow orthodox as those who hold them become numerous and formidable. In this country, therefore, we have, at the present time, no less than seven *evangelical* sects, differing widely from each other, indeed,

in many things, but bound together by a sort of semi-Christian charity, not over broad nor always very sincere. They by no means constitute a mutual admiration society. Why they exclude from their fellowship the Roman Church, the venerable mother of them all, and the great patron, if not indeed the author, of most of the doctrines they hold in common, it is not easy to say. That Church deserves to take its place at the very head of the evangelical alliance. But, however this may be, I cannot doubt that in the changes going on in the religious world the arms of evangelical charity must be still more widely extended. I anticipate the day when Unitarians and Universalists, and perhaps other sects still outside, shall be admitted to their fellowship and take their places among *evangelical Christians*.

What a strange power there is in a name! How self-complacent it makes one to wear a gracious title, even when it is self-assumed, and what is worse, clearly inappropriate. We hear much of "the evangelical churches," and of "evangelical doctrines." Men claim no little honor and deference for belonging to the one and holding to the other. It seems to increase one's respectability, if it does not deepen his piety, to call himself, and be called by others, *evangelical*.

But has it never occurred to you to inquire what this charmed word really means? You need not be told that it is formed from a Greek word which we translate *Gospel*, and signifies "good news," "glad tidings;" whatever, then, is accordant with the gospel is evangelical. The doctrines of Christ and his apostles are

evangelical. Whoever believes these doctrines and conforms to them is an evangelical Christian, whether within the seven churches which assume this title, or without them.

But this only provokes the question, what the evangelical doctrines really are. You all know what are made to pass under this honored name. It is the old artificial scheme of religion with which we have been familiar from our childhood. It has very little good news in it. At its advent angels had slight occasion to shout and sing, for it was not like the gospel of the New Testament, "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people."

As in the times of the apostles there was "another gospel, which was not another," so now there is an evangelical religion which is not evangelical, and which is a perversion of the gospel of Christ. The leading features of this popular theory may, perhaps, be expressed under the following heads of doctrine: *The Trinity; original sin and total depravity; the infinite demerit of man, and the infinite wrath of God; vicarious atonement and miraculous regeneration; the limitation of saving grace and mercy to this present life, and the awards of eternity after death—heaven for those who have been born again, and an endless hell for the vast remainder of our race.*

What peculiar claims this theory has to be called "evangelical," I confess myself unable to see. It is not eminently reasonable, but since reason is so carnal, perhaps that is a circumstance in its favor.

Nor is it strikingly Scriptural. Most of its fundamental doctrines cannot be expressed in the simple language of inspiration. It commends itself neither to the unprejudiced intellect, nor the moral sense of man. It involves at every step very serious difficulties, which ages of earnest effort have been able neither to remove nor lessen.

The doctrine of the *trinity*, which is a corner-stone of this evangelical system, falsely so called, is not merely unreasonable, but is unscriptural also. The Bible has no language in which it can be expressed, nor indeed can a proposition be framed in any language to express it, that will not involve a palpable contradiction. It is not a mystery as it is generally called, but an absurdity. No man can even conceive what he calls the *trinity*. *One* is comprehensible, and so is *three*, but a trinity, *tri-unity*, a three-oneness, is no more possible to human thought than is a square triangle or circle. Practically indeed, Trinitarians themselves cannot maintain the doctrine even, to say nothing of the thing signified, in their own thoughts. For they will either fall away on the one side into positive tri-theism, and hold the doctrine of *three* coëqual and coëternal Gods, or, on the other rise into absolute monotheism, sinking the pretended persons of the Godhead into three forms, appearances, or relations of one and the same being. Now these views may be called "evangelical," but they are not the doctrine of the New Testament. That teaches distinctly there is but one God, and that God is the Father. "To us,"

says the Apostle, "there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him;" or, as it is expressed in another place, there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all." Thus, on this fundamental point of faith, the true evangelical doctrine is very simple and clear. Instead of the trinity, which can neither be explained nor conceived, we are by it taught that there is only one God, the Father, who is the supreme object of our love and adoration; one Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son and image of God, and the mediator between God and man; and one Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God and the spirit of truth, whose office it is to enlighten and sanctify the human soul.

Nor are the popular evangelical doctrines concerning man, or human nature, either more rational or Scriptural. They maintain that since the first sin of Adam, the whole human race has been born sinful, "averse to all good, and inclined to all evil;" and that from this corrupted nature all actual transgressions flow. They insist that by nature man cannot think a good thought, or perform a good action. Now, in opposition to this whole mode of thinking, we believe that human nature is right, and that sin is not, as this theory makes it, a natural and necessary product of its activity, but an abuse of what is capable of doing God's will and glorifying his name. Besides, if man is born with a sinful nature, and is, by the very constitution of his moral being "averse to all good, and inclined to all evil," how

is he more blameworthy when he sins than the tiger is for killing a kid, or a bird for flying and singing? All act alike in conformity with their nature. If their nature is wrong, whose fault is it? But the Bible gives no countenance to these errors. That always speaks to man and treats him as capable of obedience and virtue, and as blameworthy and exposed to punishment, only because, knowing his duty, he would not do it. Then it deserves to be considered that our own consciousness, and observation and history, all combine to refute the conceit of original sin and total depravity. The world around us and our own souls within us are not such, as, according to this mischievous theory, they should be. We meet with some great sinners, and "all here have sinned and come short of the glory of God," but there never yet lived the man who was wholly evil, for as Tholuck somewhere says, such a man would no longer be the being God made; and as Coleridge remarks, he would be a devil at once. On this subject we would say with Bishop Butler, "Men may speak of the degeneracy and corruption of the world, according to the experience they have had of it; but *human nature*, considered as the divine workmanship, should, methinks, be treated as sacred, for *in the image of God made he man.*" This profound author thinks "we should learn to be cautious, lest we *charge God foolishly*, by ascribing that to him, or the nature he has given us, which is owing wholly to our abuse of it."

But if man is totally depraved when born, and grows worse and worse during his whole life, is it a thing

greatly to excite our wonder, that he should be regarded both by evangelical Christians and God himself, as fit only for perdition? How could a being of infinite holiness look upon such a monster otherwise than with infinite displeasure? Must not God hate him? Must not his indignation burn against him forever? Yet, strange to say, nothing is more certain in the gospel than the fact, explain it as we may, that God *loved man*, and loved him with infinite love, sinful and lost as he was. Even if he were an infinite sinner, and deserved God's infinite wrath and curse, still there stands the record, written in letters of light, that *God loved the world*, and so loved it, as to spare not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. In this love of God the gospel finds its source. From this, as an inexhaustible fountain, flow the streams of salvation.

And this leads me to speak of the singular perversion which the evangelical theory of religion, so called, gives to the doctrine of *atonement*. Completely reversing the clear doctrine of the New Testament, it represents Christ as interposing to placate the anger of God, and shield the poor sinner from his intolerable curse. According to the evangelical scheme of which I am speaking, Christ, by his sufferings and death, not only appeased the wrath of God, and satisfied his justice, but also reconciled him to his creature man. The doctrine of the Bible, the true evangelical doctrine, is, that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." The Son did not come to make the Father more forgiving or more loving; but the FATHER, who is eternal Love,

“sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” To reconcile man to God, and save him from his sins, was the great object of Christ’s mission, and in doing this he but does God’s will and finishes his work.

It need not be said that if man is totally depraved, any change of heart, any moral improvement, of whatever kind or degree, which takes place in him, must be simply *miraculous*. On this theory, he can have neither inclination nor power to turn himself, to repent of his sins, to hear the word, or, indeed, to do anything pertaining to a new life. He is as clay, cold and dead, in the hands of the potter; or like a block of marble to be cast aside as worthless, or wrought by the hand of the sculptor into a form of divine beauty. But if such is the condition of man, of what use are the volume of inspiration, the preached word, and all the various means of grace with which God has furnished the world? What significance have all the exhortations and threatenings of the Gospel? And why, above all, are mortals commanded to do, and held accountable for not doing, what is as impossible to them, as it would be to pluck the stars from the sky, or extinguish the fires of the sun?

One of the gravest heresies of which our self-styled evangelical brethren are guilty, is to be found in their limiting the Holy One of Israel, and bounding the infinite mercy of God by the narrowness of this world and the shortness of human life. Here for a little while, they concede, he does exhibit a stinted saving grace. But the moment the curtain of death falls behind a human

soul unredeemed, that moment God ceases to be its Father or to cherish for it a single feeling of affection or good will. Nay, that moment he becomes its immortal, implacable enemy. Instead of loving he hates it; instead of blessing he curses it; he no longer desires its welfare; nor will he allow it a moment's rest or peace. All the infinity of the divine goodness within him is at once converted into vengeance, and he keeps such a soul in being only that he may make it feel all the fury of his anger, and suffer under the stroke of his almighty arm forever and ever; and this is to be the final destiny of uncountable millions of our race.

And such are some of the prominent features of our boasted "evangelical religion." Men entertaining such opinions take on airs and assume to look down with pity or contempt upon others who cannot see the beauty of their favorite theory and are not smitten with its charms. We are not insensible to the good opinion and sympathy of our fellow-men, but we cannot purchase them at the sacrifice of our own convictions of truth. We do not believe in the so-called evangelical theory of religion, and we cannot disguise our utter rejection of it. We regard it as a mischievous perversion of the Gospel of Christ, inconsistent alike with the calmest reason and the clearest testimony of the sacred Scriptures. Sincerely believing these Scriptures as we do, holding the Bible as the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice, we cannot do otherwise than reject a scheme of human device, which is so at war with the profoundest and most glorious truths of the Gospel. We turn away from

the teachings of men only to cling the more closely to the infallible word of Christ.

In the Gospel we see God revealed, not as an inexplicable *trinity*, but as *One*, the Creator of the universe, and the Father of the spirits of all flesh. He there stands before us as the greatest and best of all beings, possessing infinite perfections, and making himself glorious by their manifestation. "God is love." There, too, we see Christ, not as the second person of a trinity, but as the only begotten Son of the Father, the express image of God, the doer of God's will, and the Saviour of the world. In the Gospel, man appears as a moral being, made in the image of his Creator, and made to find his highest happiness in knowing and serving him. Ignorant and sinful, an enemy of God by wicked works, Christ is sent into the world to seek and save him; to bring him back to the knowledge of his Father, to redeem him from his sins, and fit him, by love and holiness, for the peace that passes all understanding, and the joys of heaven. To this end Christ lived and labored on earth; and for this end he suffered and died. The agonies of the cross were not designed to appease the anger of God, but to reconcile man. It is the *love*, not the *wrath* of Almighty God that streams forever from that bloody cross. As says the apostle, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we are yet sinners, Christ died for us." In the Gospel, as in providence, God is ever the friend of virtue and goodness, and the enemy only of what is at war with man's true welfare and happiness. And so Christ stands forth forevermore as

“the sinner’s friend,
But sin’s eternal foe.”

Down through the ages the Gospel throws its clear and steady light. By it we see Christ going forth conquering and to conquer; and difficult as his path may be, and hard as the battle in which he engages, we are assured that “he shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law.” Nay, as “Lord of all,” both of the dead and of the living, his empire stretches beyond this life and this world, and embraces the whole race of Adam. And we have his gracious promise that he will not lay aside his sceptre of love till he has drawn all men to himself, till “every knee shall bow of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.” Then having subdued all things to his divine power, “the Son also himself shall be subject unto him that put all things under him, that GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL.”

This is the evangelical doctrine of the Bible. It knows no final evil. It exhibits sin as annihilated by the Saviour, and a world of lost souls as all restored. It places the glory of God not in the display of infinite vengeance, as useless as it is terrible, but in the victories of his saving grace. “We are all one in Adam,” says Tholuck, “as we shall be all one in the second representative of mankind; and by the transgression of one the sinfulness of all appears, as the redemption and glorification of all is manifest in the archetypal life of

the second." "Well may man, suffocated by the mist and tempest of this earth, cry out in the anguish of his soul," again says this evangelical man, "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? But to him who dwells in the eternal day, *the sinful race has ever been present as redeemed.*" And with Tholuck agrees Hengstenberg, one of Germany's ablest scholars, and most orthodox divines. Speaking of the curse pronounced upon the serpent in the Garden of Eden, he says, "Opposed to the awful threatening there stands the consolatory promise that the dominion of sin, and of the evil arising from sin, shall not last forever, but that the seed of the woman shall at some future time overthrow their dreaded conqueror."

THE TENDENCIES OF THE AGE FRIENDLY TO LARGER VIEWS OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY E. H. CHAPIN, D.D.

MR. PRESIDENT: I have been requested to say something, on the present occasion, respecting the "Tendencies of the Age friendly to Larger Views of Christianity." This statement of the subject involves what I call a circular-proposition. If there *are* tendencies of the age friendly to larger views of Christianity, I think we may say that larger views of Christianity are producing certain tendencies of the age, and it is proper for us to consider the larger views of Christianity which are apparent in these tendencies. The remarks which I may make, at this time, therefore, will comprehend both these phases of fact. I will endeavor to keep somewhere in the neighborhood of my theme, aiming, however, not so much at verbal consistency, as at the truth which shows itself in this direction.

Perhaps the first thing that strikes us, is the fact that this is an age of *tendencies*. An age of tendencies rather than of fixed results. The history of mankind through all time, is but *the revelation of a process*. In distinction from many other epochs, we may characterize this as an age *of great tendencies*. If you ask me to

illustrate my meaning by instances, I point to the immense social problems which are now occupying the attention of men. Never before has the geology of society, with all its strata, conformable and unconformable, been so heaved up to the surface. The questions of vice, crime, poverty, were never so thoroughly probed as now. Man was never brought so closely in contact with man. But, on the other hand, while these questions are probed and sifted, they are not settled. The problems are seen, but not solved; yet, being seen, nobody can doubt the tendency of effort in this direction. We cannot go back to our old positions of superficiality and indifference, we cannot plaster over these questions with a Christian *sentiment* of charity; we cannot answer the great problems of poverty by resignation, or merely by appealing to the decent proprieties of alms-giving. You might as well attempt to put out the flames of Etna with a bottle of Cologne water! We have to probe these questions still more. But, notwithstanding the advances that have been made, the revolutions that have been produced, yet we have reached no fixed result. Speculation upon this subject is unmoored and set adrift, and no one can doubt what has excited this disturbance.

Then again, there are the questions growing out of *modern democracy*. I mean *genuine* democracy. We know how much the existence and propagation of its principles unsettle established orders and rusty institutions. How impossible is the old quiet. See how the matter works. Europe is all sown over with grains of

gunpowder, while the emissaries of its kings are industriously at work blowing out everything that looks like light, and quenching everything that feels like fire. They must have a comfortable time of it—these continental kings—feeling as if their thrones were built against a powder-mill, with Guy Fawkes at the back door. This principle of modern democracy has *unsettled* many things, but what has it *settled*? What have we gained over ancient methods? What has been our own gain as a nation? We have many practical elements of freedom here at the North, but how long shall we be permitted to retain and use them, if the tendencies of the last few years are carried out? The Declaration of Independence is repudiated. Take the first line of it, and drive it home to its logical conclusion with the beetle-weight of its moral force, and how many institutions among us it would split into kindling-wood, annihilate old rusty forms of order, and go through Tract Societies as if they were pine stumps!

We have many elements of freedom among us (which, however, we keep as in a glass case, merely to look upon on great occasions), but how long will these be preserved? We must speak of them even now with bated breath. Liberty with us is rhetoric, rather than logic; a holiday show, rather than a work-day fact. Our principles of liberty are the insignia of dead heroes, rather than the coronation robes of living and acting powers. And yet no one can doubt the *tendency* of our modern democracy.

There again, is our Anglo-Saxon civilization. It has

accomplished great things, and beneficent things, but it sows tares with its wheat; sends out rum and Bibles; preaches to the heathen from the gospel of John, and blows them into kingdom come from the muzzle of cannon.

There, too, are the changes and conflicts within the realms of theological opinion. Everything here is in process of transition. The Protestant world looks like a dissected map. What becomes of Evangelical Protestantism? It started with the rights of private judgment, but it does not allow that principle to be carried out. It has its own intellectual thumb-screws and methods of torture; vainly endeavoring to hinder the right which at first it asserted. I say, then, these are great tendencies, and in their providential essence they are friendly to larger views of Christianity; at least, I am sure that all the great movements attempted are thus essentially friendly.

Such is the effect of our mechanical improvements, of our increased facilities for intercourse. As the earth's surface becomes compressed into a neighborhood, as nation is interlocked with nation, and we are brought into familiar contact with the vast outlying tribes of man, we cannot rest content with any superficial conceptions of God's designs concerning the human race, with any narrow methods of salvation. We cannot look upon these classes of men, that have never been favored with the blessing of the gospel, and suppose that they are doomed to everlasting damnation.

Again, the conquests that we are gaining over the

material world—these busy fields of action, which open to the eager spirit of the nineteenth century—the discipline, the power, the vast historical and providential results, which grow out of this extended area of thought and achievement, are friendly to larger views of Christianity. It is not easy on the one side to exaggerate the moral dangers of this tendency, of this enormous objectivity and dazzling performance for which there is a compensating balance in Christianity alone—in its deep-shaded sanctity and hidden life of the soul. But this large and varied action, on the other hand, rebukes all ascetic conceits, and teaches the religiousness of all life, and the sacredness of every field of effort.

And so is science in its noblest revelations and achievements, friendly to larger views of Christianity. I do not speak particularly now of the connection between science and revealed religion. Is it not about time that men should give up writing Bible geologies, Bible astronomies, and philosophical harmonies between the departments of sense and faith? Is it not time this were done? Not because Christianity is weak, but because it is strong—because it needs no other evidence than that it does the work which it came to do. Its witness is not in the accordance of the Hebrew text with the age of the Saurians, or with the nebular hypothesis; but in the accordance of the divine life of Jesus with the weakness and sin of the human soul. Revelation and science do not cut each other's orbit—they move on different planes. The kinds of evidence in the two cases are as different as anatomy and love—as

the test of character and the test of a broken bone. What amount of metaphysical reasoning can overthrow your conviction of the law of gravitation? or of the revolution of the earth? On the other hand, what fact of science can take away your experimental conviction, that the teachings of Christ have carried exceeding peace into the chambers of your soul? have exalted in your heart the love of God? have comforted you in the turbulence of great sorrow, and opened for you an inner vision "which no calamity can darken?" Even supposing that two boulders from the pre-Adamite world should crash against the first chapter of Genesis, can that quench your thirst for divine life?—can that cancel the fact that Christ satisfies that thirst? That man has but little genuine faith in his Bible who turns his reason into a dark lantern to read it by. Let him not be afraid that the freight of divine truth, which that book carries sublimely over the waves of ages, will ever be wrecked on any coast of scientific discovery. In no depth of strata shall we find anything older than the God it reveals. In no new system unfolding from the bright and awful mysteries of the sky will this yearning, struggling, aspiring soul discover anything so needed as the salvation which that Bible brings, and the immortal bliss to which it leads the way. But while this is the case, Christianity does not require scientific harmonies or evidences.

I do not speak thus because I detect anything hostile to Christianity in the largest range of modern discovery. The noblest scientific work of this day is a vindication

of religion from the most independent stand-point. But Christianity needs no patronage—it has strength enough of its own. But let us read the Word of God in the light of his works, even as we interpret the works by the inner glories of his word. And as we carry the New Testament out into that vast cathedral, we find the glory of divine love upon its pages, blending with the revelations of that love from every crypt and corner of nature.

It is a fact, then, that the great movements of the age—the great tendencies, whether we consider its developed humanity, its vast field of work or of science—are friendly to larger views of Christianity. This in itself would be a slight thing, were it not also the fact that these larger tendencies do proceed from Christianity itself—out from its deep core and centre, as you will find when you take Christianity out of its sectarian limitations, and open its leaves under the brightness of firmamental and everlasting truth. There are larger views of Christianity in the age, because the age, or the men in it, are becoming more Christian.

Mr. Chapin here alluded to the city of New York, and the influence of the recent revival, and then passed on to speak of the latent tendencies among men to acknowledge the essential truth of Christianity. He said it was a common thing to hear people speak of New York as a great sink of corruption—that hell paints its ghastly frescoes on the walls. But New York is not all corrupt—all abominable—all sensual. It is the great heart to which and from which flows the arterial current of a world.

This very revival had shown the *latent* religious tendencies in the souls of thousands toiling in the midst of its sensuality and its sin. He then proceeded to speak of the encouraging and discouraging aspects of the time so far as a more liberal and tolerant feeling is concerned. Sometimes, said he, it seems as if the millenium of brotherly love and Christian sympathy had arrived and then suddenly the pleasing vision is dispelled. Those of us who are familiar with the coast of New England, have often experienced the delight of one of those clear, sparkling June mornings, which bathe land and sea in such marvellous beauty, and do indeed make a "bridal of earth and sky." We know, too, how by an instantaneous whiff the entire scene has been transformed, and thin jackets and buoyant hearts have cowered, drenched and shivering, under the influence of what is called "a sea-turn." So is it with the religious atmosphere around us. There are times when everything is radiant with Christian love and harmony. When men feel in the depths of their hearts the recognition of the Christian *life* as the great font of Christian union, and that where the spirit of the Redeemer is, there *He* is. Then it is confessed, that even the Universalist, or the Unitarian, may be a genuine disciple, and that there is no heresy like the heresy of censorious judgment, or self-assumed orthodoxy. All is bright and clear. But this does not last long. There comes a sea-turn. From some quarter or another, the old leaven quickly shows itself, and in a moment we are chilled to the marrow, by the sour, salt, drizzling vapors of bigotry and exclusiveness.

Mr. Chapin then went on to consider the larger views of Christianity beginning to prevail.

There are men who have thought clear through the crust of sectarian dogmas, who cannot think away the substance of Christianity. They cannot apprehend it merely as an abstraction, as nothing more than a divine ideal floating before the vision of favored seers, or, than the intuitions of common consciousness, fusing into definite shape. Out of all the siftings of free thought, out of the crucible of criticism, heated seven-fold, comes this conclusion, that we can account for Christianity only as a historical fact impinging upon the world, and organized in the life of the Redeemer.

Larger views of Christianity are indicated in the tendency to apprehend Christianity as not ecclesiastical, but human. The watch-word that runs along the ranks of the churches, is to advance from profession to practice—from words to things—from traditions to work. This is the tendency now; to regard the Church not as an institution to be kept apart from the world, because the world is common and unclean, but as the vital heart of faith and love, inspired by the divine life of Jesus, and sending abroad its streams of sanctification, until it shall be found that nothing is common or unclean. Christianity, like its founder, is going abroad in the world more and more as a power to seek and to save the lost. Joined to every human interest, and foremost in every noble work—penetrating the waste places of civilization as well as of barbarism—the heathenism of great cities as well as the dark lands of error—holding

terms of peace with no abomination, and compromising with no human wrong.

Mr. Chapin then alluded to the demands which Christianity made upon institutions and churches, and cited the negro's prayer that the "Lord would rim-rack and centre-shake the devil's kingdom." There was a spirit in our age, which, unless the churches acted up to that spirit, would rim-rack and centre-shake them.

Christianity goes forth now aiming to convert men, not to abstract opinions, but to make them one with the Father, whose love they have not returned, and with the Christ, whom they have never known; members of that spiritual organism, that divine substance, which is more vital than creed, or ritual, or smoking incense, or sounding psalm—not contracting its field within the narrow limits of human tradition, or pampering its flock with the conceit of the elect, but convincing each of his relations to all, contending in the strength of unfailing promise, against the colossal evil that overshadows the world; detecting the divine image in humanity, under all its abominations and its scars, purposing to overturn and to gather in, until there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

We may notice, also, the tendency to recognize broader grounds of Christian union, than mere identity of intellectual belief. Never before has it been so nobly confessed, that we do not enter the fold of the Church by a logical ladder, but by the simple surrender of the heart's allegiance to Christ.

The doctor proceeded here to speak of Jouett, Mau-

rice, Robertson, Florence Nightingale, Channing, Arnold, as essentially members of the true Church.

There is the large-souled brother, who preaches in Brooklyn, and who will permit every honest man to call him brother, however much he may differ in opinion from him—why, his great heart, at every pulsation, leaps sixty degrees beyond the logical limits of his creed. “The voice is Jacob’s voice,” “though the hands are the hands of Esau.”

The congregations are coming to represent not sects, but religious affinities—men baptized into widely different creeds—men never baptized at all; those, who, at last, have discovered that they have been for many years embosomed in the wrong church—those who have never found any church that they could rest in—men whose heads have been clear enough, but whose hearts, until now, have not been touched—men whose hearts were all right, but whose heads were confused by intellectual perplexities; all these find themselves coming together upon the floor of some edifice, which is to them truly a *meeting* house; separated so long by pen-folds of creed, and glaring at each other over the hedge-fence of sectarianism, all at once they find themselves sitting in the same pew. Rambling over the waste region of skepticism, not knowing what to do with Sunday, except to lounge, or smoke, or ride it away, they have found that Christianity is not a dull chorus of homilies; they have seen the tender image of Jesus looking into their own hearts, have felt the living inspiration of communion with him. Parthians, Medes, and Elamites,

Cretes, Arabians, and dwellers in Mesopotamia, have met together, where, by some miracle of spiritual aptitude, each hears in his own tongue the truth of God.

The orthodox believer finds himself chin deep in nominal heresy, but drinks of a fountain that really satisfies his thirst. The heretic willingly passes under the crags of a stern theology to some place where his devout affections are awakened, and his heart finds peace.

In all this some may detect only signs of decaying faith, and, as old Milton says, "prognosticate a year of sects and schisms." But let us not believe this. This shifting about does not prove indifference to divine truth, but it merely indicates larger views of Christianity. And with all its dislocations, I doubt whether any age has contained more genuine faith than this.

When men, instead of being anchored by the head, drift by the heart, we may believe that they are moved by some deep current of religious feeling, which is better than a shallow surface of conformity, or a dead calm of acquiescence.

With a thrilling and effective appeal to the young men of the Christian Union, to enter manfully and vigorously into the great harvest-field of moral action—to go forth in God's strength, exhibiting these larger views of Christianity in all the relations of life—to discard all selfish interest, and seek only to serve God in simplicity and truth—to follow under the guidance of Him, whose word is truth, and whose spirit is life—and an allusion to the prayer with which Bacon closed his great work, Mr. Chapin concluded his remarks.

APPENDIX.

FRUITS OF TRUE CATHOLICITY.

THE following letter embodies the concluding remarks of Dr. Osgood, which he had not time to deliver at the Anniversary.

MOSSWOOD, FAIRFIELD, *July 17, 1858.*

GENTLEMEN OF THE PUBLISHING COMMITTEE:

I am grateful to you for the interest expressed in my cursory remarks at the opening of the Anniversary Meeting of the Christian Union, and I am glad to comply with your request that I should carry out the line of thought upon the third point specified as originally intended. I took up as much time as proper regard for the rights of other speakers warranted, and I preferred to leave my address unfinished rather than to trespass upon my neighbor's privileges. The liberty of the pen, however, is not bound by any such limit as that of the tongue, and I will add some thoughts upon the fruits of that Catholicity which we anticipate in the Broad Church now rising throughout Christendom.

In my view, Christendom has heretofore been divided

chiefly between two powerful classes of believers, who are distinguished each by a characteristic and exclusive idea. The first class, as we have seen, may be called the High Church, and is represented most consistently by the Roman chair. Its characteristic idea is the authority of an exclusive priesthood to dispense divine grace by ritual sacraments, which embody and apply the power of God's incarnation in Christ. The second class may be called the Low Church, and is represented most consistently by the Reformer Calvin and his followers. Its characteristic idea is the authority of the letter of Scripture as interpreted by a certain scheme of doctrine which dispenses the divine grace exclusively to the elect through saving and supernatural faith, in the merits of Christ's vicarious atonement. These two systems have left the strongest mark upon the history of Christendom, and even now, with various modifications, divide the churches. The leading denominations are to be characterized by their affinity with the one or the other of the two. Thus all prelatical churches, whether Greek or Anglican, and all thorough-going Episcopalians, not excepting even Methodist Episcopacy, have a strong leaven of High Churchism in their composition. The extreme right of the Lutheran body inclines the same way and almost equals Rome in its claims to priestly authority and sacramental grace. The Presbyterians, Baptists, Orthodox Congregationalists and a portion of the Episcopal Church accept the Low Church idea and put far more emphasis upon their alleged Evangelical doctrine than upon their priesthoods.

Various bodies of Christians sympathize only in part with either of these two classes. Thus Methodism, which claims for its discipline more power over its people than English Episcopacy dares claim, goes beyond Calvinism itself in its zeal for instantaneous conversion, and is in spirit, as in history, a mixture of rigid authority and emotional enthusiasm. Portions, moreover, of the nominally priestly and Evangelical bodies are earnest champions of the New Catholicity, like the free theologians of the Church of England and of our American Orthodox Congregationalists, whilst great numbers of noble men and women in all churches are impatient of the old exclusiveness, and looking for a new day of liberty and life.

Towards these two classes I feel great respect, and believe that they have both been of great service to humanity—the High Churchman mainly by comprehensive discipline and effective Christian nurture—the Low Churchman mainly by vindicating to all the liberty of reading the Scriptures, and by urging the need of personal repentance and regeneration. We have many a quarrel with both for errors of practice and opinion, but we do not forget that both systems are forms in which our common humanity has shaped itself, and our position as Liberal Christians compels us to look for the redeeming qualities in the thought and action of all earnest bodies of our fellow men. We do not wish even Romanism or Calvinism to die out until they are supplanted by powers more effective than theirs, by a cosmopolitan largeness greater than that of Rome, and

by an Evangelical zeal beyond that of old Geneva. We are all heirs of something of Hildebrand's grand visions of God's Kingdom among men, and we are all freer for Calvin's defiance of the Counsel of Trent and his appeal to God's grace by the Scriptures and the spirit above the traditions of men. Within both these great divisions of Christendom thus indicated, we believe that divine graces and human virtues are working out a better future, and for many of the best thoughts and movements now acting upon Christendom, we are indebted to men nominally in the ranks of Catholicism or Calvinism. Yet, with the systems themselves, we have little sympathy, and cannot for a moment limit God's grace or man's welfare to the prerogative of an exclusive priesthood or to the influence of an exclusive dogma. Not inside but outside of the circle of the transubstantiated wafer and the magical creed, we look for the most significant signs of the good time coming, and we cannot for a moment believe that the welfare of humanity is shut up in the Trent Catechism or the Westminster Confession. Nay, there is now in all the leading minds of Christendom a certain leaven of heresy, and they whom earnest souls hear and follow most gladly, cannot easily pass muster under the old standards of Orthodoxy. They cannot see any such utter antagonism between nature, man and God, as is implied in the ghostly penances of Catholicism or the doctrines of total depravity and passive conversion as held by the Calvinist creeds. Our new Christian thought carries its philosophy of reconciliation into every sphere,

and in building the new temple, it calls on nature for the materials, and man for the worship, and God for the inspiration. No better name for the rising church can be given than that which Christ's own divine and human character supplies. Call it the Church of the Divine Humanity, and as such, let it accept and use all the worthy elements of the two great dynasties that have preceded. Catholicism, with its Church of the Incarnation and priestly authority; and Calvinism, with its Church of the Atonement and elective grace. It is cheering to know that there has been from the beginning a broad church movement virtually like ours. We see it in such minds as Justin, Clement, and Origen of the primitive age; in such liberals as Erigena and Abelard, and such devotees as Eckart and Tanler of the middle ages, and in all the freest and best minds of the Protestant times, whether in the Old World or the New, from the days of Arminius to those of Channing, Arnold, and their peers.

In speaking of the New Catholicity that is now giving signs of its power over man, it becomes us to take a very modest tone and to beware of claiming to ourselves or our favorite champions the glory that belongs to God himself, and to the humanity which he is inspiring. Our best thoughts and purposes are not our own but his, and they come to us through a reason which is his gift to us and our race, and by a Providential discipline which he has provided. We cannot exclude even what is called the world, or our secular civilization, from his jurisdiction, and the new sciences and arts that are

bringing mankind into such unprecedented community of thought and action, have come from the study of his laws and must work out his majestic plans. They promise in their own plane to illustrate the divine order of our humanity in its higher spheres, by showing that all material agencies and natural principles tend to a common centre, and in their vast diversity lead to a mighty unity. The old creeds that were formed in ignorance of natural laws are trying in their way to patch up an alliance with the new science and art, but they cannot do it without removing some of their cardinal principles, and it may matter little to the Liberal Christian whether liberal views are to triumph under the lead of wholly new organizations, or the new wine is to be kept for a season in the old bottles, if only the new wine is allowed to do its work and the new life appears. What significance there is, for example, in the fact, that whilst the old languages of theology are becoming obsolete and the phrases of the Westminster Catechism are as unintelligible to the majority of active men now as the Latin of the Romish Mass, our Christendom has lately received from art and science two languages, that are read and understood wherever civilization is known. The language of mathematics and the language of music are now the same throughout Christendom, nay, throughout the globe, the one in the sphere of business and exact science, the other in the sphere of sociality and sentiment, and they both unite in calling for a Catholicity of idea and feeling that must shame the shibboleths of sects and the anathemas of church councils.

The Catholicity of the future must not apologize for art or science, whether to sacrifice music to the harp of David, or astronomy to the fame of Moses or Joshua. It must start with the doctrine, that nature, humanity, and God belong to the same universe, and a true wisdom will study all diversities of beings and powers with an eye to the overruling order. So far as human affinities are concerned, the aim will be to bring men into such relations that each shall be free to use his own gifts and earnest to promote the supreme good. The true charity is that which thus combines liberty with order, and by its harmony of differences tends to a unity more majestic than any of Hildebrand's visions of the triumphs of the kingdom of God, that he saw descending from heaven upon the hills of the eternal city.

This Catholicity is to be seen as never before in the relations of man to nature, alike in what we receive from nature by our senses, and what we impress upon nature by our force of thought and will. The old creeds were formed by men who looked upon nature as accursed, and regarded life as heavenly, precisely as it became unnatural. Hence the doctrine of the mortification and even the death of natural affections, instead of their true consecration. Catholicism and Calvinism both share in this ghostly view of the accursedness of natural things, and both must renounce or modify their doctrines if they would not shut their eyes to the new light that is breaking in upon the system of nature, and revealing the handiwork of God, not the devices of the devil. We must not forget that the men who invented the doc-

trine of infant damnation, total depravity, and the like, looked upon the simplest natural affections as degrading ; and the ghostly monks who formed the darkest portions of the popular theology, believed that God was to be propitiated by fastings and scourgings, yet that he refused his highest graces to men and women who took marriage vows, and so became parents, and took their own children to their arms. Calvinism shared largely in the old monkery, and there was far less of the warm blood of healthy nature in the pulse and the pages of Calvin than of Luther. Luther, by his genial temperament, did as much for Christendom as by his theology. His lute and his musical voice, his genial companionship with his family and friends, were a mighty protest on behalf of nature against ghostly austerity, and made him as much an emancipator of life itself from bondage as of the Book of Life from proscription. The end is not yet, and we shall never know the true remedy for all lusts and excesses, until the proper study and use of nature secures the consecration of the senses and gives the death-blow to sensuality.

The new Catholicity shall show itself in the relations of man with his own race as well as with nature. Surely we cannot live alone, and for good or ill we must have society. The old Catholicity in its way understood this want, and marvellously provided for the social instinct by the most elaborate and powerful and various associations. No gift of intellect or enthusiasm or energy was neglected, and every devotee was encouraged to use his own talent in the fellowship most inspiring to

himself and most useful to the church. The new Catholicity must give a still broader and higher range to our human powers and affections in spheres not ruled over and narrowed by priestly exclusiveness. We must claim all that is truly human as part of our birthright, and cherish it sacred and affectionately, no matter in whatever sect or nation it may be found. We must accept the principle so well sanctioned by reason and scripture, that we find the whole and true humanity not in the individual, but the whole race; and that when we do our part most effectively as one member of the Lord's body, we feel most emphatically the working of the other members and follow the guidance of the divine head. This idea, if consistently carried out, will establish new and better fellowship between man and man, leading different temperaments, classes, sects, and nationalities to integrate themselves by sympathy and co-operation, and insisting upon no less a magna-charta in our great heritage of humanity, than that given by the apostle in those memorable words: "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

The sense of human fellowship, which is so important alike in the privilege conferred and the service demanded, does not end with this earthly life, but extends to the humanity that has passed into the spiritual world. We belong to all men, and all men belong to us, and what we all feel in our literary and patriotic fellowships, we are surely not to forget in our Christian communion. The saints and sages of our race are still ours as truly as the loved ones who have gone from our homes; and it is a most

interesting fact that the sense of fellowship between the living and dead, which has been so strong and vital in the ancient Church, is returning to use from quarters little inclined to yield to mere traditions. The Positivism of Auguste Comte asserts in the most decided manner the essential continuity and solidarity of the human race, whether living or dead, and tries to make a new religion of the worship of the dead, which, in its great absurdity, intimates a vital truth. Our popular Spiritualism, with all its follies, surely testifies to the same leading idea, and is interesting as showing the decided belief of multitudes in the connection between the living and dead. But Positivism and Spiritualism are mere shadows without that faith in the presence of God's spirit with men, which gives the race its only unity here, and promise of continuity hereafter.

So it is, that truly human fellowship rises into religion, and man does not find himself one with his brother except by finding him in God. The sense of God's presence in the human soul is the crowning assurance of our divine birthright, and the Holy Spirit gives the true communion. Every age of the Church has known this power, but its jurisdiction has been sadly limited by creeds and ceremonials, so that inspiration has been regarded as belonging, if not exclusively to the old Bible men, at least to certain mystical experiences at sacred times and places. Its power is to be claimed and known in the whole domain of life, in every capacity and faculty, in every duty and enterprise. Our best thinkers are teaching us that in the most practical

sense all wisdom begins in the consciousness of God's presence, and all true energy goes forth in the might of his will. We need to apply this doctrine, not only in awakening sinners, but in enlightening and strengthening believers. Quite sure we are that in the track of the great revival which has been sweeping through our church, and in which we have all somewhat shared, no better movement could follow than an earnest effort to arouse and energize the millions now reposing upon their laurels, and thinking themselves saints of God because they once knew the pains of penitence and the peace of forgiveness. Our American churches need a broader and stronger doctrine of divine influence than is often preached in the pulpit, or held in the pews. We need a spirituality that shall be practical, and a practice that shall be spiritual. We need a faith that counts life but death without God's presence, and which carries the sense of God's presence into all work as well as into all worship. We need a fellowship that enjoys God in working for him, and works for him by enjoying him—a fellowship that looks for heaven here and hereafter not merely by escaping hell, and entering upon an existence of dreamy inaction, but which regards true love and true service as in themselves heavenly, and as now opening the life eternal, or communicating the infinite and imperishable good. We need a hope that looks to better things than to repairing the mischief of poor Adam's lapse, a hope that shall look not merely to recovery from that fall, but to the consummation of the Creator's majestic plans for the discipline and welfare of the

race which he created in his own image, and which he can never dismiss from his care. Our humanity becomes true as it is loyal to his plan, and so rules over our earthly fellowships as best to foreshadow and hasten the coming of that kingdom where all souls bless each other in being blessed by God, and being free in their own rightful orbits whilst true to the supreme order, they follow the law of divine attraction and enter upon heavenly peace.

I have thus given some hints of the new Catholicity in its relations with nature, man and God, according to the doctrine of the Divine Humanity which we find in Christ and his Church. That we may not end in mere generalities, let me say that if the question is asked, by what organization, sect or institution, is this great movement to be carried out, we reply that all true thinkers and workers are to do their part. It is difficult to say what will be the future of the great divisions of the present church, whether they will tend, as in the primitive age, towards fusion under some central power, or whether the spirit of disintegration will continue as for the last three centuries, and the only unity shall be an agreement to differ. There have been many attempts to fuse together the various branches of the High Church, and Oxford in our day has fondly cherished the dream of uniting all bishops again under the bishop of Rome. Such a thing may be, but we have no faith in any such event. Schemes of union between different branches of evangelical orthodoxy have generally failed and must do so if they require anything like substantial

agreement. The last scheme, however, has come nearest success, and the establishment of Young Men's Christian Associations has aimed to bind together young men of all Evangelical denominations, as they are called, into a practical fellowship. These associations have undoubtedly done much good, especially by giving society and comfort to young men who are strangers in our cities, and by favoring a higher tone of thought and enterprise among our youth. We object only to the exclusion of Christians of other orders from their favor, and we cannot for a moment identify ourselves with any movement that denies to a Roman Catholic, or a Universalist, or a Unitarian, or a New Churchman, the Christian name and privilege. The worst tendency of such associations is to check manly freedom of thought, and to bring the force of numbers and patronage to bear in favor of that spirit which is quite too prevalent in this country, the disposition to fall in with the majority and to count votes instead of weighing evidence. We dislike the tyranny of banded sects quite as much as that of banded factions or legions. We who are Liberal Evangelical do not desire to enlist in behalf of our own views the machinery of exclusiveness which we observe in the Orthodox Evangelical.

The disposition of other classes thus to band together calls upon the friends of liberal thought to stand up for their principles, and hence your opposition rises, not indeed on any antagonism towards others, but in attachment to your own ground. Your association has made no ambitious claims to public favor, and began in a

modest and unostentatious way. You have done far more than you promised, and I may say as one who attended your first meeting in the library of this church, that I have watched your proceedings with solicitude and satisfaction, and with you I heartily rejoice in the abounding success of this representative assembly, with its unexpected numbers and enthusiastic interest. I rejoice especially in your reverential temper; and am glad that whilst you are not ashamed to be considered "Liberal," you are determined also to be Christian, and to labor and hope for a noble future of the Liberal Evangelical ranks.

Your platform is a very important and consistent one. You meet together as Christians, owning your rights of opinion, and not even presuming to make the vote of a majority the rule in any matters of belief. You allow Catholic and Calvinistic the same liberty of expression that you enjoy yourselves, and you will not silence them by your vote, or exclude them by your denunciations. Yet practically you find yourselves mainly dependent upon the liberal denominations for sympathy and aid; and the style of thought at this meeting is such as must place you outside the lines of the popular and exclusive theology. Be not ashamed of your position, and doubt not that the next twenty-five years will bring such changes over public opinion, that the minutes of these discussions will seem to have been prophetic of coming events, and our heresy may look very much like the then current orthodoxy. As the world now is, you have the spirit of science, literature, and art upon your

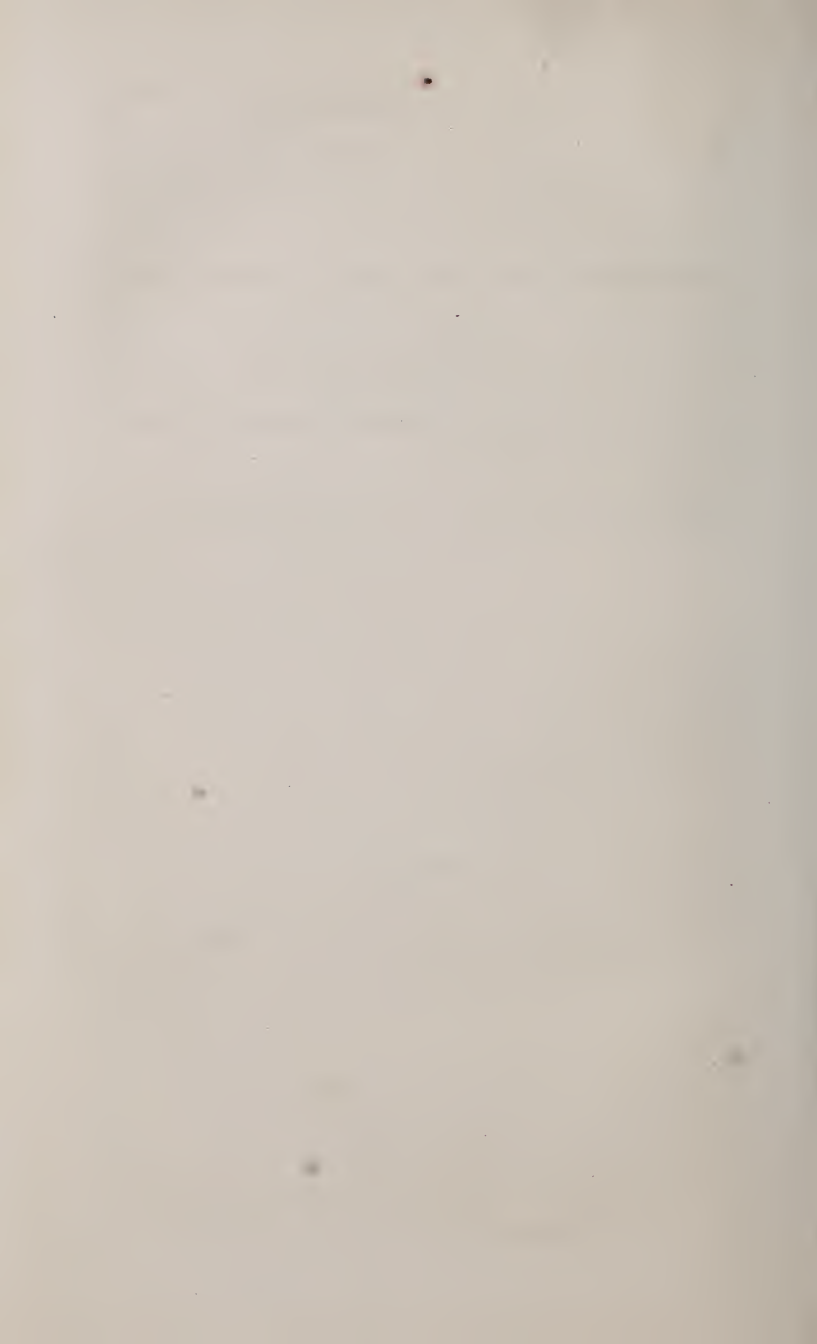
side, and the strongest men of Christendom, even within the ruling churches, virtually favor your principles. You will keep your decision and your charity, abiding by your personal convictions, yet willing to accept light from every quarter, aiming to do your own work bravely, yet remembering that God's providence and grace are greater than our poor thought and will. In God's hands we leave the catholicity of the future, and the harvest of its blessed fruits.

I remain, Gentlemen, in Christian fellowship,

Your friend and servant,

SAMUEL OSGOOD.

THE END.



**AN OUTSIDE VIEW OF AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS,
AND THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE
AMERICAN PEOPLE.**

THATCHER & HUTCHINSON have just published a book of extraordinary power and interest entitled

SHAHMAH IN PURSUIT OF FREEDOM;

OR,

THE BRANDED HAND.

That an instinctive love of freedom is inhaled in the very atmosphere of mountainous countries, will not be questioned by any close observer of mankind; it, therefore, is not surprising that there should exist a race, even among the mountainous portions of Algeria, which should furnish ONE earnest seeker after a true freedom.

Shahmah was not only a superior specimen of his race, but such an enthusiast had he become in his admiration of freedom, that he early resolved to make it the study of his life. During his collegiate studies, having formed the acquaintance of an American gentleman who kindly furnished him with a copy of the Declaration of American Independence, and gave him a glowing description of the beauties of our "Free Institutions," he at once resolved to visit our land, in order to become intimately acquainted with the interior working of a system founded on such a perfect basis.

In his straightforward simplicity of character and earnestness of purpose, he of course finds great difficulty in reconciling his preconceived opinions with the manners and customs of the country; but his is not a heart to faint at the appearance of apparent obstacles, and while he sees things as they are, he does not lose his faith in the possibilities of the future.

There is a freshness about his narrative that none but a highly gifted mind, from his peculiar standpoint, could attain, rendering the book extremely fascinating to the lover of romance, while it affords the deepest study to the philosopher, and opens a rich field of prophecy to the lover of his race.

In short, it is a book that will touch the hearts of the people, and will have its thousands of readers and admirers.

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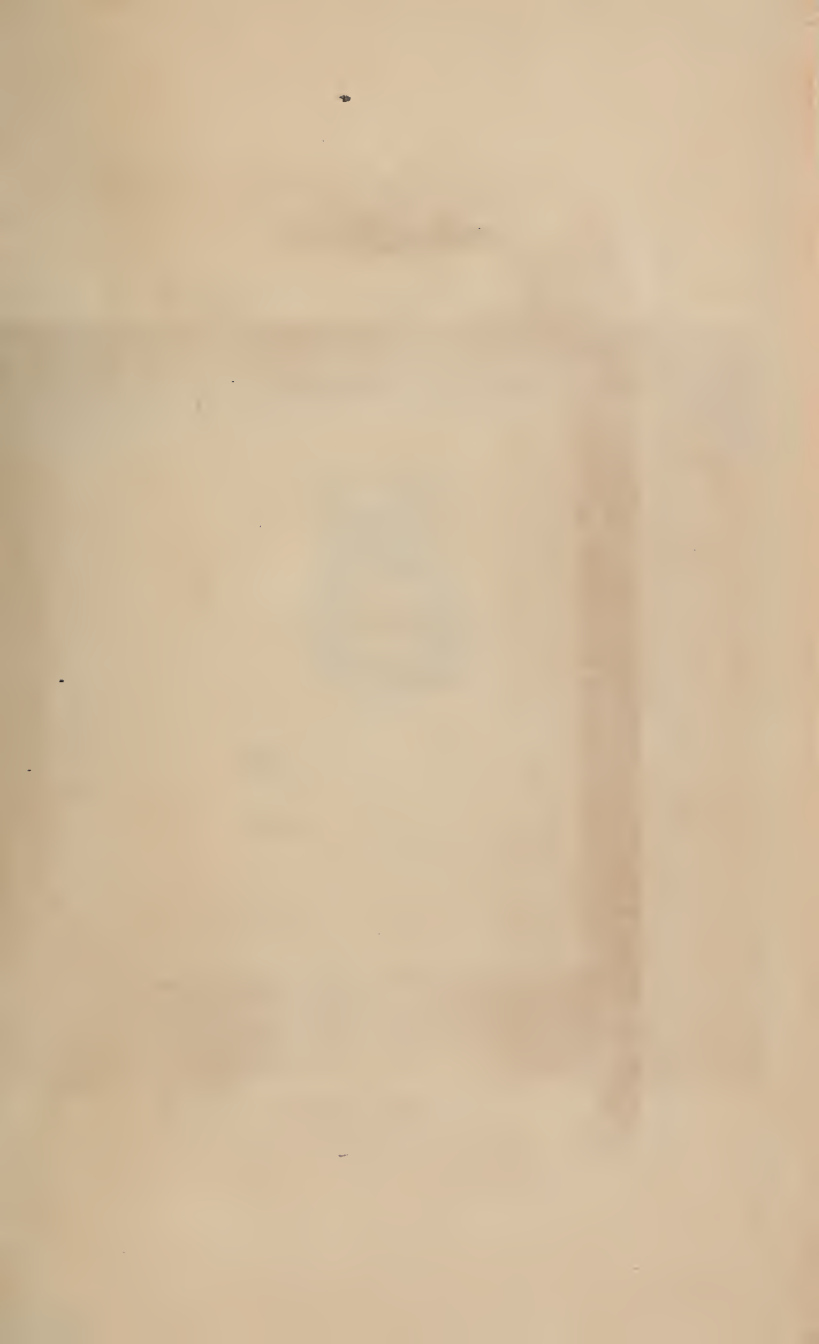
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